

# Military Chaplains' Review

Fall 1991

## OUTREACH AND DISCIPLESHIP

*Introduction to the Fall Issue*

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*Outreach Challenges for the Military Chaplain*

Win Arn

Charles Arn

*Lost in the Fifties: Church and Family in a Changing World*

Penny Long Marler

*Constitutional Guidelines for the Military Chaplain Evangelist and Chaplaincy*

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### **Special Report**

*Mass Casualty Ministry - Luby's Cafeteria*

Larry R. Wedel

**Book Reviews**

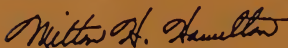
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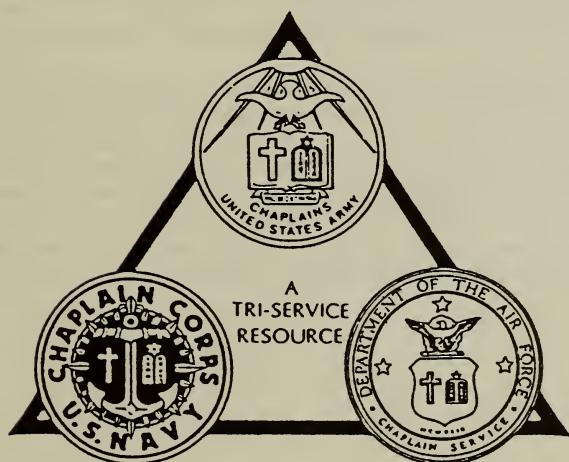
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Fall 1991







# **Military Chaplains' Review**

Professional Bulletin of the US Army Chaplain Corps

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## Introduction to the Fall Issue

This issue, devoted to the twin themes of the outreach and discipleship, is long overdue. These historic emphases in Christian tradition helped the church grow in strength and numbers. The neglect of these disciplines is evidenced in the disappearing membership of some of our mainline Protestant denominations. While the chaplaincy is not established to accumulate membership statistics, there is a mandate that many hold from their denominational traditions to bring the unchurched into the fold. The opportunities are vast in our Army, and proselytizing (which is illegal) need not be a recourse.

The articles here present a strong challenge to chaplains to be intentional in their outreach to the unchurched. Successful methods are suggested, from **Troops Encounter Christ** to **Shared Resources** with neighboring installations and organizations.

The advertisements inserted throughout the magazine are indicative of what a good publicist can do in providing nonsectarian advertising for the chapel program. These types of ads are limited only by the imagination and the creativity of the writer. Try some of your own design. If not satisfied by your own creations, call the Church Ad Project (800-331-9391) for information on their ads shown in this issue. (Copyright by the Church Ad Project, 1021 Diffley Rd, Eagan, MN 55123, reprinted with permission.)

Youth ministry, an important aspect of chaplains' work, is often lost in the shuffle of the command master religion program, counseling appointments, and field or sea duty. A number of communities have turned to lay volunteers to help. Three models which work well are presented here. **Troops Encounter Christ** began as a youth outreach program involving lay volunteers. **Malachi Ministries** and **Military Community Youth Ministries** both make extensive use of lay volunteers, and use their outreach ministry to channel kids into the faith community of their choice.

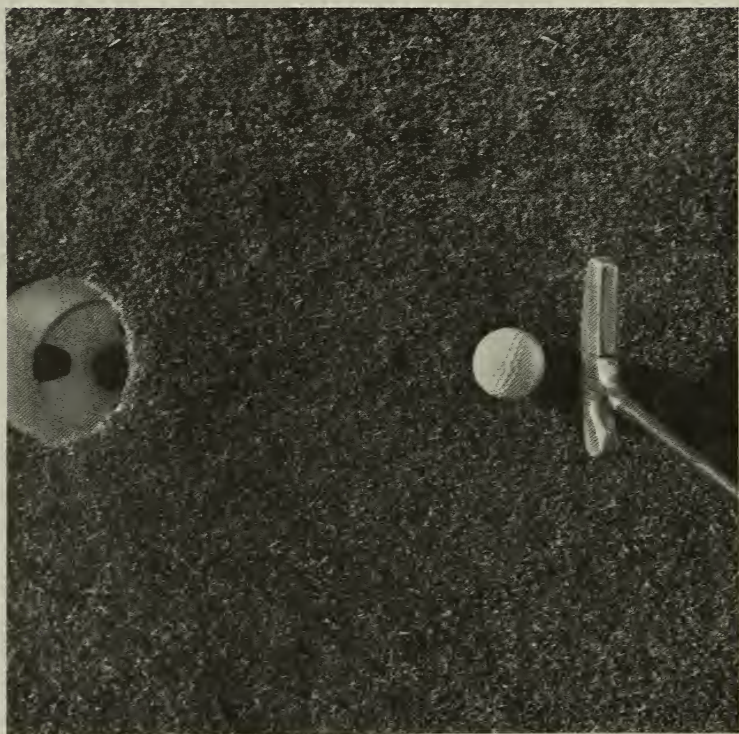
The **Special Report** featured at the end of this issue is a stirring example of how Army chaplains are involved in the tumultuous events of today's headlines.

Read and enjoy!

*Editor*

# Is this where you pray on Sunday morning?

We know an even better place to experience joy and fellowship than the golf course.  
Our place. This Sunday experience the miracle of Jesus Christ on our turf.





# Outreach Challenges for the Military Chaplain

**Win Arn and Charles Arn**

*Editor's Note: The authors, civilian church consultants, have been contracted by the Navy Chaplain Corps to develop a four-day training course in FY92 on the topic of "Outreach." Their observations in this article grow from research in preparation for this course and have implications for all branches of the military.*

For military chaplains these are the best of times . . . and the worst of times.

The opportunity for influencing the lives of thousands of men and women is as great as it has ever been. And increasing numbers of recruits are entering the service with no previous exposure to a pastor or priest or rabbi. The opportunity—and the need—are unprecedented.

Yet chaplains are facing the same belt-tightening financial cuts that are affecting all aspects of the military. Commanding officers will be increasingly forced to make budget and billet cuts which will affect chaplains as much, and perhaps more, than other corps.

For both of these reasons—responding to the great opportunity, and demonstrating their great contribution—chaplains are well advised to give a high priority to outreach in the military community.

The purpose of this article is to identify five challenges which we believe will, when responded to, result in a significant increase in the number of military personnel who experience the positive benefits which the chaplain and chapel community have to offer.

## **1. The military chaplaincy needs training and models for outreach.**

It is unusual to find a chaplain who excels in effective outreach, or a chapel community that is growing dramatically in numbers and vitality. From our

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observations there are several reasons for this shortage of outreach training and outreach models . . .

- *“Outreach” is not in the written job description of the chaplain.* What is not inspected is not expected. And outreach is not inspected. Because one of our country’s inalienable rights—freedom of religion—also means freedom *from* religion, the armed forces do not, and should not, encourage religious “proselytizing.” Yet in seeking to avoid a spiritual scalp-hunting charge, chaplains should not shy from the legitimate activity of expanding the positive influence of the military chapel program and its ministry. The definition of “outreach,” according to the Random House Dictionary, is: *the act of extending services and benefits to a wider section of the population.* If the chaplain believes there are legitimate benefits to those who participate in the religious military activities, the act of extending those benefits to a greater number is certainly within the rights and responsibilities of the military chaplaincy.
- *The chaplain’s role has traditionally been reactive—to those who seek out him/her for counsel, to those who attend services, and those with serious personal needs.* Older chaplains may still recall the days when the military was composed of Lutherans, Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Jews, Baptists, etc. The number who came into the military with strong religious ties and who sought out the chaplain was more than adequate to fill his/her daily schedule. Today, however, the favored denomination in the military is ‘no preference.’ And ‘no preference’ means there is an increasingly large military population that does not give serious thought to coming to a chaplain, except in the most dire of circumstances.

It is not uncommon to find chaplains who believe they are doing adequate outreach. And, indeed, some outreach is being done. But if it were adequate, there would not be the relatively few numbers in worship on Sunday or Bible study groups during the week. An exclusively *reactive* approach to performing chaplain duties is a certain prescription to decreased influence and representation of the chaplain corps in the military community.

- *The structure of the military chaplaincy does not generally reinforce outreach initiatives or reward outreach results.* The risk associated with starting new outreach programs may be seen by some chaplains as not worth the intangible reward. Promotions are not based on percentage increase in worship attendance. Citations are not given when new enlisted men or women attend a Bible study.

From where, then, does the *reinforcement* for outreach come? In our observation it comes from the chaplain’s inner self. If the passion for outreach is there, the action usually follows. But, if being a chaplain is nothing more than a job, and the goal nothing more than promotion toward eventual retirement, then outreach will not receive a high priority in a chaplain’s time and effort. The truth is that it is easier to plan sermons, provide counsel, and pray at ceremonies

than it is to struggle with ways to reach out and involve new people.

Try asking yourself the following two questions: 1) “Why did I become a chaplain?” and 2) “Does outreach—expanding the influence of my religious program—have any relationship to why I am a chaplain?” In the final analysis, the motive for outreach must come from within, from the conviction that a life in relationship to God and His will is far better than one outside of that relationship. And the process of reaching out to military personnel with this great benefit is at the heart and soul of why a chaplain will be intentional, proactive about outreach.

## **2. The military chaplaincy must show how its message is relevant to today’s service personnel and their families.**

To understand how officers and enlisted personnel view the chaplain and religious programming, we conducted a number of “focus groups.” A focus group is an interview technique commonly used in business for understanding the opinions of various “people groups” toward a particular issue. Our focus interviews were comprised of different groupings; some were officers, some enlisted, others were spouses and dependents. Some groups were comprised of those who regularly participated in the chapel’s religious programs, other groups were of those not involved.

Because outreach assumes a focus on persons not presently involved in religious programs or activities, we were particularly interested in the view such people held of the chaplain and chapel activities. Here are some actual comments from recorded interviews with participants who were *not* active in chapel programs, responding to the question, “Why do you think most military personnel are not involved in chapel-related activities?”

*Missy:* I think people are too busy. In normal daily hours you’re always doing something.

*Marshal:* Another reason is that if you thought you had a problem there are quite a few other sources you could go to. There are counselors pretty much all over the base that you could talk to, so normally you could find the answers that you wanted somewhere else.

*Lisa:* I think people have time for things they feel are important. If I wanted to go to the beach, I’d find the time. In terms of the chapel, I think a lot of people figure that what they got out of it isn’t worth the time they would have to put into it.

*Rick:* When I think of a chaplain, I think of major family problems. Like divorce, suicide or something like that. So if you don’t have those problems, there’s no reason to see the chaplain.

*Kurt:* It’s like a drastic last ditch. Like, “I’ve about had it; now I’ll go to the chaplain.”

The deep penetration of secularism into the American conscience has and is removing religion as a viable answer to life’s problems. This secular view is reflected onto the chaplain; and while he/she might be a nice person, the enlisted personnel perceives little need for what is presently offered. For



many service personnel, the message that a vital faith helps one to live successfully and effectively has seldom been heard or understood.

Chaplain's would significantly increase their perceived relevance by shaping their message to address the problems, needs, and goals of the people they seek to serve. As one recruit in our focus group said, "The chaplain has nothing to say to me to make my life better . . . the message is just not relevant." Relevancy is achieved when a chaplain "walks in the shoes" of those he/she would serve, and then provides a real-world answer to the real-world issues they are facing.

### **3. The military chaplaincy should examine its operational paradigms to determine their effectiveness.**

A paradigm is defined as "a grid of values and rules through which we interpret and understand our lives." Paradigms provide structures for solving our problems and strategies for accomplishing our goals. Paradigms are why we do things and how we believe things should be done. They are the lenses through which we see and interpret our world.

*Time* magazine (January 14, 1991) recently ran an essay on paradigms and observed: "The world, with a surreal, decisive crispness, has been sorting itself into categories of old paradigms and new paradigms. The 1990s have become a transforming boundary between one age and another, between a scheme of things that is disintegrating and another that is taking shape. A millennium is coming, a cosmic divide. The 20th century is an almost extinct volcano; the 21st is an embryo."

Not only will chaplains increasingly struggle with old and new paradigms, so, too, will the civilian church. Many are already in the midst of it. And the struggle is a pivotal one because the outcome will determine whether the church (and chaplain corps) is a relevant and significant influence in American's lives into the 21st century, or a relic of days gone by. The old and empty cathedrals of Europe, and the vast unchurchedness of that population, give stark testimony to the consequences of the church holding onto old paradigms as the world changes.

How does one know when an old paradigm should be discarded and a new paradigm sought? Specifically, how can military chaplains know if their ministry paradigms are adequate/appropriate for today's young military personnel? Here are some questions you could ask:

1. Am I actually accomplishing my mission? Am I satisfied with the results I am achieving?
2. Is my religious program perceived as relevant and of value by my constituency?
3. If I were to begin fresh in pursuits of my mission, would I be doing what I am doing now . . . and in the same way?

## **The Difficulty Of Changing Paradigms**

Contemplating a shift in one's operational paradigms is uncomfortable. It is basic human nature to prefer the known to the unknown. Change is difficult. Ruts are easy to drop into. Yet, the world around us is changing. And each

new generation brings a new set of values, priorities, and perceptions. Chaplains must be as willing as any commanding officer would be to change tactics if a situation dictated, in the pursuit of a successful mission.

Yet often in the religious field it's even more difficult to change one's paradigms. Various activities become "sanctified" in their own right. Music must be sung a certain way, liturgies read correctly. . . buildings, worship styles, meeting times, Bible translations are just a few of the things that may take on a "larger than life" quality. A shift in paradigms that might require a change in certain sanctified ways of doing things is often met with resistance.

Yet old paradigms need not be a permanent fixture in our psyches. Joel Barker, in his popular video *Discovering the Future*, makes the important comment: "You can choose to change your paradigms. You can choose to shrug off one set of rules and adopt another set. Sometimes people look forward and say, 'how can we cope with all this change?' Yet we, as human beings, have demonstrated repeatedly the capacity to create and deal with paradigm changes."

#### **4. The military chaplaincy must involve the laity to achieve maximum outreach.**

From our observations in the civilian community, the "pastor-to-member" ratio of growing churches is often between 1:150-1:200. Once the ratio climbs over 1:300, we seldom see growth occurring. There are simply too many laity for one clergy to pastor. The ratio of chaplains to "laity" in the Navy/Marines/Coast Guard (Navy chaplains service all three branches) is 1:693. According to our information, the chaplain-to-soldier ratio in the Army is 1:437, the Air Force chaplain-to-personnel ratio is approximately 1:650. None of these ratios, incidentally, includes family members.

Consequently, the steps toward more effective outreach by the religious military community cannot be the exclusive concern of already over-extended chaplains. The key is in deploying the laity!

### **Classes of Leadership**

A useful concept in the civilian church is that of "classes of leaders." It is a means of categorizing church workers and evaluating their activity as it relates to outreach and growth. . .

"Class I" leaders are those laypersons whose time and effort is focused on serving the existing church—Sunday School teachers, acolytes, choir members, greeters, etc. Class I leaders carry on the maintenance ministry of the church/chapel. They are obviously an important part of any successful chapel program.

"Class II" leaders are volunteer workers whose primary efforts focus outward on those not presently a part of the faith community. Class II leaders may be involved in follow-up visits to newcomers, organizing a community-interest event, developing and distributing flyers, etc.

"Class III" leaders are part-time staff persons, such as a youth

director or part-time choir director. In the military community they might be civilians who help in some function with chapel-related activities.

“Class IV” leaders are the professional staff—pastor, associate pastor, chaplain.

“Class V” leaders are denominational executives, or in the military community the chaplains in supervisory responsibilities.

If the goal is to see an increase in the participation level of military personnel in the religious community, which of the five classes of leaders should receive the emphasis? Obviously, you would want to emphasize the training and deploying of Class II leaders. Yet in most civilian churches, and quite likely most military chapel communities, 98% of the available ‘people power’ is used up in Class I activity. Is it any wonder that most churches—and most chapels—are plateaued or declining? In our experience, a healthy goal is that approximately 30% of those persons who have a role or task should be functioning in Class II—outreach—activities. Moving toward this goal could significantly change the outreach and involvement level from decline to growth . . . from lethargy to vitality.

## **5. The military chaplaincy must increase the number and diversity of programs offered.**

In our research with the Navy we found that when effective outreach was occurring, it was frequently related to a wide diversity of groups and activities. One illustration is aboard the aircraft carrier USS RANGER, where George Linzey is command chaplain. The weekly religious schedule includes 66 different planned activities which respond to a variety of needs, issues, and personnel. On Sunday there are 10 events, Monday: 9, Tuesday: 9, Wednesday: 10, Thursday: 9, Friday: 11, Saturday: 8.

The proven fact in church growth is that *new groups produce new growth*. Granted, chaplains often feel so over-worked keeping old programs alive, they shudder at the thought of starting anything new. But it’s a proven fact: new groups produce new growth. In the civilian world we offer the following guarantee to churches: “Do your homework so the groups you start are responding to real needs and issues. Then aggressively begin establishing new groups. The result will be growth!” This principle will work equally well in the military; because people are people. The greater the diversity of your groups, the more people will find a group that fits them.

## **Assumptions About Outreach in the Military Chaplaincy**

In conclusion, we would like to suggest seven “assumptions about outreach” which we believe to be true. Consider them in light of your own ministry and determine whether they represent your view, as well.

1. Outreach should have a significant priority in the chaplain’s time and effort.
2. Chaplains can improve their effectiveness in outreach.
3. With an increased priority on outreach, additional personnel will experience the positive influence of the military chapel programs.

4. Effective outreach will take into account the vast diversity of personnel and faith groups in the service communities, and thus program accordingly.
5. Outreach can occur within the guidelines of the U.S. Constitution and the chaplain's military mandate.
6. Effective outreach requires both a relevant product and effective communication strategies.
7. Effective outreach will occur only when the chaplain genuinely cares about the people in his or her community.

Having served as a pilot in the Air Force . . . having conducted outreach training on a number of Army bases . . . and in currently working with the Navy, I am impressed with the quality, dedication, and desire for effective ministry of the typical chaplain. You are to be saluted! For many chaplains, outreach was an important part of their motivation when they enlisted—the opportunity to share God's love with significant numbers of young men and women. Yet for many, that original passion has been beaten down . . . or buried. Now can be the time to resurrect that vision, revitalize and renew it, and put it into action. We would challenge you to be about the rewarding task of outreach! You have been placed in the midst of great opportunity. So much more can and should be done. You *can* do it! Will you?



# Become stronger with this simple exercise.

Your body may be in great shape, but what about your soul?  
Join us this Sunday as we worship in the fellowship of Jesus Christ. And get the  
kind of workout that leaves you feeling good all over.



# Lost in the Fifties: Church and Family in a Changing World

**Penny Long Marler**

Several years back, Ronnie Milsap made nostalgia a hot, present-day commodity with his song, "Lost in the Fifties." Against the background beat of four crew-topped crooners, he intoned:

We'll let the music take us away back to the feeling we shared when they'd play . . . "In the Still of the Night" (shoo-bop, shoo-bop) . . . Yes, those precious hours we know can't survive. Loves all that matters while the past is alive . . . Lost in the Fifties tonight.<sup>1</sup>

Nostalgia is hot topic in churches, too. Several years ago, I sat in the congregation of a large, suburban Southern Baptist church while a new staff position was being discussed. About half-way through, a prominent Professor of Christian Education at a local seminary stood up and said, "We need a strong youth Sunday School program—after all, it is the strong Sunday School program of the fifties that made this church what it is today; made this denomination what it is today."

Two years ago, I consulted with a Disciples of Christ congregation near a large, Midwestern downtown area. When asked to describe the "golden days" of the church, few hesitated to point back to the strong youth and family program of the fifties and sixties. One woman exclaimed, "I think that we need to hire a full-time youth director. If we don't get a better youth program, we're never going to grow."

<sup>1</sup>Mike Reid, Troy Seals, and Fred Parris, "Lost in the Fifties Tonight (In the Still of the Night)," W.B. Music Corporation, 1984.

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Last year, I was speaking to a group of Parish Librarians in New England about the declines in church membership and Sunday School enrollment in the mainline. In the discussion afterwards, one woman rose and said, "I'm not really too worried about the fact that our children are leaving the church after confirmation. That's normal. They always come back as soon as they get married and have children, don't they?" There were affirmative nods all around.

About six months ago, I was interviewing members at one of the largest United Church of Christ congregations in Massachusetts. A good cross-section of members, old and young, expressed the conviction that a chief problem in their plateaued congregation was a "poor youth program." They are convinced that a young, energetic youth minister is the answer to growth concerns. "After all," one lay leader suggested, "the way you grow a church is through a youth program." Replicating a successful, past program seems like the best answer for church programming stasis today.

## **The Changing Structure of the American Family**

In an address to a major denominational mission board last year, Lyle Schaller stated (and I'll paraphrase) "There seems to be a growing amount of evidence that this year is 1991. If that's true, we've got problems. If it were 1951, we might know what to do." Nostalgia is not an altogether bad thing; neither is an exciting youth program. But in our hurry to bless the past, the church is in danger of becoming myopically mired in it and increasingly irrelevant.

Recent demographic data illustrates the dramatic changes that have occurred in American society since the pew-packed fifties. Such changes underline the problems that beset the church today—and open up new opportunities for truly responsive ministry. For, indeed, the proper focus for fifties' nostalgia is not "how good it was" but "how good we were." Because for the most part, the churches responded creatively to changing social realities—social needs.

The fifties' church catered to growing numbers of young families with children. The "market"—as it were—was driven by a large group of consumers with similar family characteristics. If we, as church leaders, editors, writers and educators, are to be as responsive today, the task is not to recapture the family of the past but to rediscover the family of the present and redefine the task of ministry in *this new context*.

Fifties' families were well-scrubbed, orderly, and predictable. There was a working dad, a homemaker mom, a tall, earnest (if sometimes rebellious) teenage son, a moody and obedient middle daughter, and a capricious and spoiled youngest girl. They may have had an aunt and uncle who were childless (but they were trying) and probably had a grandmother and grandfather who lived nearby. Most likely, however, they all had (or knew) a few older widowed women—either their grandmothers, greats, or church ladies.





## The Family of the 50's

Figure 2



The Family of the 90's

Most of the kids went to church with friends who also attended their school. In fact, church, school, and family were the major socializing agencies of the fifties. In the family, children developed a sense of “we-ness.” There were family suppers, family vacations, family outings, and family reunions. At school with their peers, children sharpened their sense of “me-ness”: autonomy and identity. Finally, taking its cue from age-graded education, the church also reinforced “me-ness” through adult and children’s sunday school, youth programs, children and youth choirs. The church was the “family place” because we were all under the roof—but for the most part, the family “split up” the minute they hit the doors.

The nineties’ family looks very different: Roseanne is no Donna Reed; and, as far as the atypical family goes, “My Three Sons” can’t touch “My Two Dads.” The single, career mom of “Who’s the Boss?” has little in common with the quietly wise and stable, Robert Young. The raucous, irreverent—and laughingly tolerated—Bart Simpson makes the “the Beave” look angelic and highly domesticated. The Golden Girls’ vivacious and unusual household makes fifties’ T.V. seniors seem dependent, at worst, cranky and eccentric, at best. Further, while *Cosby* may fit the demographic picture of the fifties’ family—many children, wise and witty parents (in their first marriages)—the picture is different because mom is a “career woman,” no less a lawyer.

Media-types and media-stereotypes of the family have changed markedly. And while media images are not the only measuring sticks, they are important ones. Cultural images both form and are informed by social reality.

The nineties’ portrait of the family is really a composite of many family-types. Indeed, there is no demographic norm. There is still the traditional family—but it is smaller. In addition, Mom and Dad probably both work. And, the chances that Mom and/or Dad will separate or divorce at some point have drastically increased.

The children are involved in a variety of school-related and other extra-curricular activities—and so are their parents. If they go to church, their attendance is most likely sporadic. For example, children may alternate weekends with a divorced parent. Or, working parents skip Sundays because they need the “family time” to go on promised outings with their children—or, they simply decide to “sleep in.”

Another typical family pattern is the married couple with no children. This family type includes empty nesters and younger to middle-aged working couples (DINKs: double income, no kids). Some DINKs choose not to have or adopt children; others are waiting longer to “start a family.” All these married couples may choose church—but the competition is stiff: leisure pursuits and work get in the way.

Single-parent families are also a growing family type. Most single-parent families are headed by women; some are divorced, others are never-married. Many work long hours for less-than-adequate pay (certainly less than most of their male counterparts), and others receive government assistance in order to feed, clothe, and care for their children. Church may

be an option for some single moms—but many find it difficult to get the kids up and ready early for another day. In addition, adult education classes and fellowship groups at churches are often programmed around the interests and needs of couples. A single-parent may feel like a “fifth-wheel.”

Finally, in addition to parents and children, married couples, and single-parents, are increasing numbers of “nonfamily” households. They include persons who live alone (elderly and widowed persons or working singles) and a vast array of unrelated persons who live together (young professionals, retirees, etc.). The lifestyles of persons in these nontraditional families vary widely—and we don’t know much about their attendance and participation patterns.<sup>2</sup> The elderly (particularly the widowed) may have difficulty getting to church because of lack of transportation or simply because the building is not accessible. Singles perceive that the church is a place for “people with kids.” Many prefer to spend their Sundays out-of-town with friends, in bed “catching up on sleep,” or at the office. Special worship services, cultural events, or community meetings may bring singles to church from time-to-time. A lot depends on their schedule and their interests.

There is little doubt that the traditional family has become fragmented. The individual is increasingly in modern society.<sup>3</sup> Intimacy and connectedness—what I call a sense of “we-ness”—are found in new contexts if they are found at all. The increasingly isolated fragile web of family life raises new questions about the sources of healthful relationality.

Where do young children get to know older persons who pass along a sense of history, who serve as models of aging, coping, and surviving? Where do young professionals mingle with and learn from middle-aged persons who are not their bosses? Where do teenagers without fathers find older, male friends or guides? Where does the dual career family—badly in need of time together—find that refreshing space, that oasis? Do these stretched and stressed persons find intimacy and necessary cross-generational involvement at the church? Or, is the church still following a program that banks on the personal networks of support and nurture once found in close neighboring and nuclear and extended families? Unfortunately, while the church claims that it is a “family place,” it is rarely the place for the family (traditional or not) to be together.

The picture I have painted of the modern “fragmented family” probably sounds familiar. The media has tracked many of these trends throughout the seventies, and certainly the eighties. Denominations (and congregations) have responded by adding a singles’ program here—a senior adult minister there—and maybe even an experimental intergenerational program or event. For the most part, other forms of family have been treated as temporary variations from the norm (and the ideal) of the traditional family.

<sup>2</sup>Recently, a careful analysis of available religion poll data has resulted in a helpful typology of “church dropouts”—many of whom fit into nontraditional family types. See, Kirk Hadaway, *What Can We Do About Church Dropouts?* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990).

<sup>3</sup>Douglas Walrath, *Frameworks: Patterns of Living and Believing Today* (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1987).



*In The Church's Ministry with Families*, Diana Garland points out that ministry-responses to alternate forms of family are usually described by qualifying the normative, traditional family concept. For example, they are labelled: single-parent *families*, blended or *stepfamilies*, and even *families* of one.<sup>4</sup>

Garland claims that a sociological definition of the family is being projected as the ideal family structure. Mom, Dad, Suzy, Joey, and Sally are the sociological norm and are treated as the sociological, and even the Biblical, ideal. What Garland does not realize in her defense of alternate forms of family is that the traditional family is no longer the sociological norm in this country. The alternate families she defends have become *the* family of today. A review of recent census data demonstrates this fact clearly.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, at the close of the fifties almost half of the households consisted of married couples with children.<sup>5</sup> By 1990, a little over a quarter of all households are made up of 2 parents and their children—a 20% decline in its overall share of the U.S. household structure in thirty years.

The proportion of U.S. households that consist of married couples only, however, has remained virtually stable. So, where has the difference been made up? In two areas: in the rise of “other family households” which include single-parent families and the increase in “nonfamily” households.

While single-parent households have increased their share of the overall household structure portrait by 4%—the nonfamily category has increased by 15% overall. In fact, in 1990 there were about 27.3 million nonfamily households, representing almost 3 of every 10 households.<sup>6</sup>

The largest category of nonfamily households are persons “living alone.” This type has nearly doubled since 1960. Those “living alone” include 2 major subgroups: never-married young adults (18-24) and widowed, elderly women (65+).

Demographers and social scientists are having much conversation at present about the increase in “premarital residential independence”—that is, the numbers of young adults who are leaving home to establish their own household prior to getting married.<sup>7</sup> The increase in college educations has pushed this trend, generally. This “interim phase” of independence from a

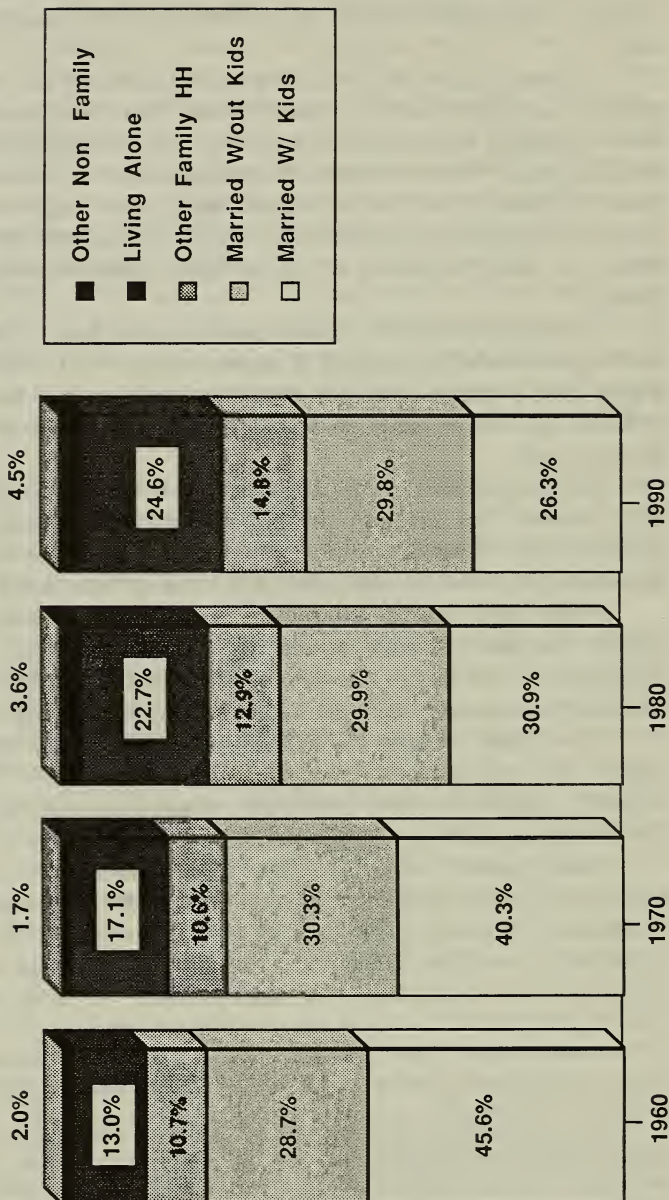
<sup>4</sup>Diana Garland, “The Church's Ministry with Families: An Introduction,” in *The Church's Ministry with Families*, D. Garland and D. Pancoast, eds. (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1989), pp. 9ff.

<sup>5</sup>Data for Chart 1 are from two sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Household and Family Characteristics: March 1990 and 1989,” *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, no. 447, Figure 1 and U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Household and Family Characteristics: March 1960,” *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, no. 106.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup>Linda Waite, Frances Goldscheider, and Christine Witsberger, “The Development of Individualism: Nonfamily Living and the Plans of Young Men and Women,” *American Sociological Review*, 51 (1986), 541-554; Calvin Goldscheider and Frances Goldscheider, “Moving Out and Marriage: What do Young Adults Expect?” *American Sociological Review*, 52 (1987), 278-285; Frances Goldscheider and Celine Lebourdais, “The Falling Age at Leaving Home, 1920-1979,” *Sociology and Social Research*, 70 (1986), 99-102.

# The Changing Structure of Households in the United States



family group has broader implications for future family patterns. These young adults are gaining a sense of their own autonomy—and the range of choices available outside of the traditional family. In addition, as Goldscheider and Goldscheider have found, this transition has encouraged a “loosening” of traditional values about not only the family, but ethnicity, work, and the church.<sup>8</sup>

Elderly, widowed women living alone also experience considerable role change. Widowed women face the unwanted, but unavoidable, dissolution of their once-traditional families. First, they lose the active role of “mother” when their children grow up, move away, and perhaps, start their own families. Second, they lose their status as “wives” through the death of their husbands. Their family is fragmented; for the first time in many of their lives, they are alone.<sup>9</sup>

Let’s now turn to the remaining category, “other nonfamily households.” This household type has more than doubled since 1960. The pattern includes families like the “Golden Girls”—which is a nonfamily household with a family subgroup. Data about this group, as the category itself, is emerging.

In summary, by 1990 no category of household structure dominates—and the “nonfamily” category represents about 30% of the whole. The traditional family of the fifties is no longer the sociological norm. The family today is pluriform.

Not only have the proportions of family and nonfamily households changed—but the size of these units has changed. Interestingly, not only has the proportion of traditional families decreased, but they have also become smaller.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, fewer children per family, more single-parent families, and larger numbers of people living alone contribute to the decline in household size.<sup>11</sup>

So, families and households are both getting smaller. Concurrently, natural webs of intimate social relationships are limited. With the breakdown of the extended family, cross-generational relationships are also less available. And, even in more traditional families, other demographic factors are at work which further disrupt and fragment family life.

<sup>8</sup>Calvin Goldscheider and Frances K. Goldscheider, “Ethnicity, Religiosity and Leaving Home: The Structural and Cultural Bases of Traditional Family Values,” *Sociological Forum*, 3 (1988), 525-547.

<sup>9</sup>Helen Lopata, “The Social Involvement of American Widows,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 14 (1970), 41-57. Further, neither younger never-marrieds nor older, widowed persons showed significantly lower levels of church activity in a study completed by Christiano. Kevin Christiano, “Church as a Family Surrogate: Another Look at Family Ties, Anomie, and Church Involvement,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 25 (1986), 339-354.

<sup>10</sup>Data for Chart 2 are from U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Household and Family Characteristics: March 1990 and 1989,” Figure 2.

<sup>11</sup>Data for Chart 3 are from: U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Household and Family Characteristics: March 1990 and 1989,” Table A-1.



Fewer and fewer mothers stay at home to “raise the kids.” Primarily driven by a stagnant economy, the proportion of married women with children in the labor force (full and part-time) has increased dramatically. Since 1960, the number of working moms with preschool children has doubled; the number of working moms with children 6-17 is about one and half times larger.<sup>12</sup>

The fifties’ picture of the traditional family with a stay-at-home mom has been shattered: only a quarter of all households maintain that family structure and in over half of those, the mother goes to work. And more working Moms mean additional income for the family and less parental time with the children.

In a recent study, Nock and Kingston found—quite as expected—that parents in dual-earner families spent markedly less time with the children.<sup>13</sup> Comparing the longest work day and Sundays, the authors discovered that working dads triple and working moms double their time involvement with their children on Sundays. Perhaps even more telling is the differential between single-earner parents and dual-earner parents in time spent with children “having fun” on Sundays. Dads in dual earner families spent 30% more time on Sundays “having fun” with their preschoolers than their single-earner counterparts. Moms in dual earner families spent 50% more time on Sundays “having fun” with their preschoolers than their single-earner counterparts.<sup>14</sup>

If Sundays are *the* major day for spending time with children in dual-earner families, what are the implications for church programming? The necessary baseline time for developing family intimacy may occur throughout the week for single-earner families. So, splitting up for church program (and worship) activities may not be problematic. But what about dual-earner families for whom Sunday is the primary day to be together, learn together, and have fun together? Is togetherness in the car driving back and forth to church enough?

Other disruption factors for the modern family are separation, divorce, and remarriage. According to Bianchi: “Between 1950 and 1981, the number of divorces increased from 385,000 to 1.2 million annually and the divorce rate more than doubled. Since 1981, the number of divorces and the divorce rate have leveled but remain high.”<sup>15</sup>

Another trend that has changed the configuration of American family life is a marked increase in the number of children born to unmarried mothers. In 1960, one in 20 births was to an unmarried mother; in 1987, the statistic was one in four.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Data for Chart 4 are from: U.S. Bureau of the Census, “The Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1990,” 110th edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990), Table 209.

<sup>13</sup>Data for Chart 5 are from: Steven L. Nock and Paul Kingston, “Time with Children: The Impact of Couples’ Work-Time Commitments,” *Social Forces*, 67 (1988), Table 1.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>Suzanne Bianchi, “American’s Children: Mixed Prospects,” *Population Bulletin*, 45 (1990), p. 7. Data for Chart 6 are from Figure 3 in the same publication.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9

# Average Number of Children Per Family

1960	2.34
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1970	2.33
------	------

1980	1.89
------	------

1988	1.81
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# Average Household Size

1960	3.33
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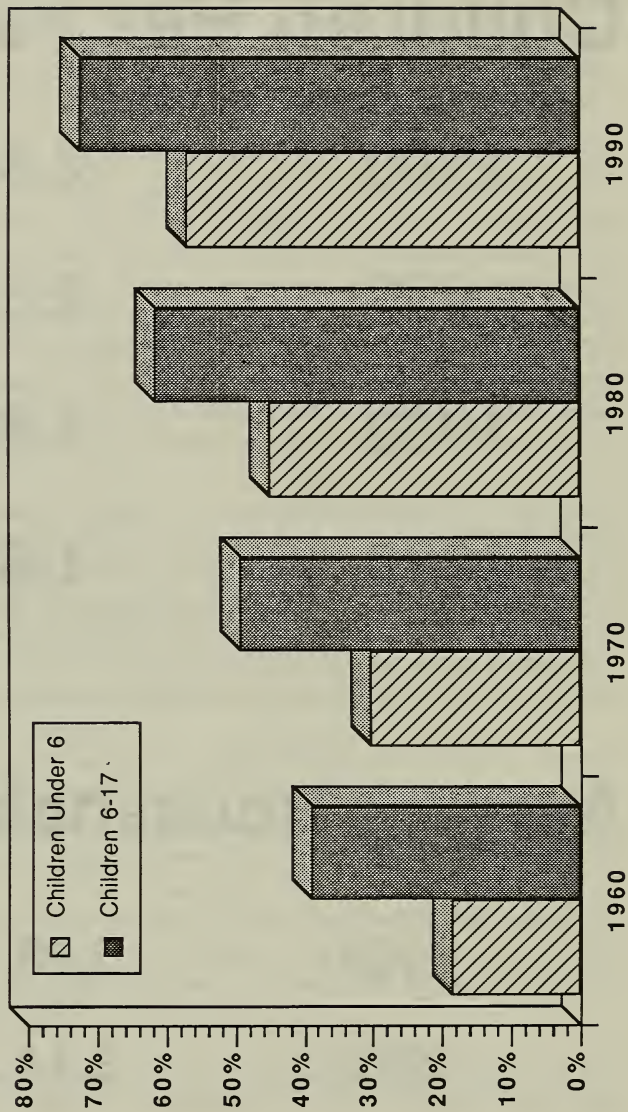
1970	3.14
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1980	2.76
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1990	2.63
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Chart 4

# Percent of Women in the Labor Force (Two Parent Families by Age of Children)



Overall, a high divorce rate and an increase in out-of-wedlock births have resulted in a rise in single-parent families. Between 1960 and 1990, the percentage of children living with one parent—usually the mother—increased from 9 to 22 percent.<sup>17</sup> The percentage living with their father increased from 1 to 3 percent; 3 to 4 percent lived with another relative.<sup>18</sup>

Bianchi concludes that,

Proportionately fewer children today than 30 years ago can count on growing up in a household that includes both their mother and their father. Demographers . . . estimate that at least one-half—perhaps as many as 60 percent—of the children born today will spend some part of their childhood living in single-parent families.<sup>19</sup>

Family disruption has become the norm rather than the exception.

The implications of family disruption and a decrease in parental time are critical. In the late eighties, Search Institute conducted a nationwide study of 6th through 12th graders under the auspices of RespecTeen—a Lutheran Brotherhood program.<sup>20</sup> The sample was quite large: 46,799 students. The results, in tandem, are quite startling.

The investigators created measures of “at risk” behavior which included: alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use; premarital sexual activity; depression and/or attempted suicide; anti-social behavior including vandalism, theft, group fighting, trouble with the police, or weapon use; school absenteeism; and disregard for vehicle safety including driving after drinking and failure to use seat belts most of the time. In addition, information was gathered which focused on such factors as: positive family life, parental standards, self-esteem, and positive peer influence.

Of especial interest are the correlates of “at risk” behavior among these American youth. The negative scores indicate that the *absence* of these qualities is directly related to increased “at risk” behavior. For example, positive family life—the degree to which one’s family provides love and support—is the strongest correlate of “at risk” behavior, so that lack of family love and support is the best predictor of increased “at risk” activities. Significantly, three of the five strongest correlates in this study are directly related to parental presence and support.<sup>21</sup>

If the family is increasingly disrupted and parental time is shrinking, what are the prospects for the health and well-being of youth? It is important to note that church involvement is important as well as peer influence. Again, while church may be a “family place” in that the whole family is involved in activities under one roof, church is not necessarily a place where the family can be together. Programming tends toward age segregation based

<sup>17</sup>Data for Chart 7 are from: Bianchi, “America’s Children: Mixed Prospects,” Table 1, supplemented by “The Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1990.”

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup>Bianchi, “America’s Children: Mixed Prospects,” p. 10.

<sup>20</sup>Peter L. Benson, “The Troubled Journey: A Portrait of 6th-12th Grade Youth,” (Minneapolis, MN: Lutheran Brotherhood, 1990).

<sup>21</sup>Data for Chart 8 are from Benson, “The Troubled Journey,” p. 92.



on the traditional school education model.<sup>22</sup> Peer socialization is the center of church programming philosophy. Yet, family influence and involvement remain the most significant shapers of positive behavior.

What is the future of the family on the U.S. demographic horizon? There is little reason to believe that a return to a traditional family centered culture is likely, at least not for the *next* thirty years. The aging of the baby boom—as well as their pluriform family structures—will continue to make an impact. Even the current “boomlet” is not expected to be strong or lasting enough to change the trend toward aging in this country.<sup>23</sup>

Interestingly, by 2020 demographers project that the proportion of the American population under age 18 (children and youth) and 65 and over (older adults) will be approximately the same: 20%.<sup>24</sup> What does this trend suggest? Bottomline, it is likely that the “nonfamily” household will increase—that is, those who live alone or who share living space with persons other than kin or spouses. It also means that at least 30% of our entire population (children and the elderly) will be dependent on the production capacity of the remainder of us. The coming strains on our overall economy will certainly not encourage larger families or stay-at-home parents. While this trend hardly portends the demise of the family, it does signal the end of *one* normative type of family.

The family in American culture will, for the foreseeable future, be a mosaic of varied family types including those currently designated as “nonfamily.” Intimacy, nurture, support, and commitment will be sought and found in alternate webs of social relationships based on factors including, but not limited to, blood or marriage.

Finally, how can these remarkable changes in American family life be summarized? First, the sociological family portrait is increasingly plural. These families include: married couples with children, married couples without children, single-parents, persons living alone, and persons living together without blood or marriage ties. No one constellation dominates American households.

Second, all families and households are becoming increasingly smaller. Third, families of all types are experiencing disruption through separation, divorce, remarriage, and the pressures of dual careers. The web of social life that is the family is increasingly smaller and more fragile. yet, despite this fragmentation, the importance of family life and parental involvement for the health and well-being of children and youth—indeed, of everyone—remains.

## Implications for the Church

The intent in presenting this data is twofold: one, to raise awareness about the changes that have occurred in the structure of American family life

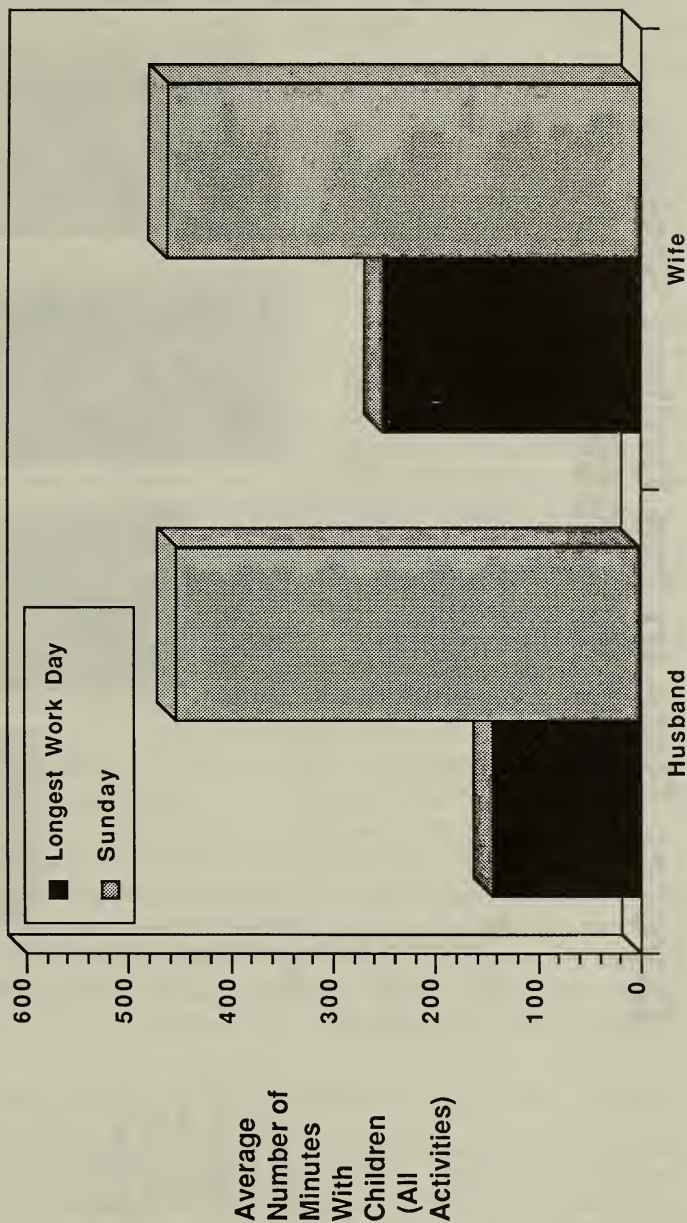
<sup>22</sup>Diane Pancoast and Kathy Bobula, “Building Multigenerational Support Networks,” in *The Church's Ministry with Families*, D. Garland and D. Pancoast, eds. (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1989), pp. 173-174.

<sup>23</sup>Bianchi, “American's Children: Mixed Prospects,” pp. 35-36.

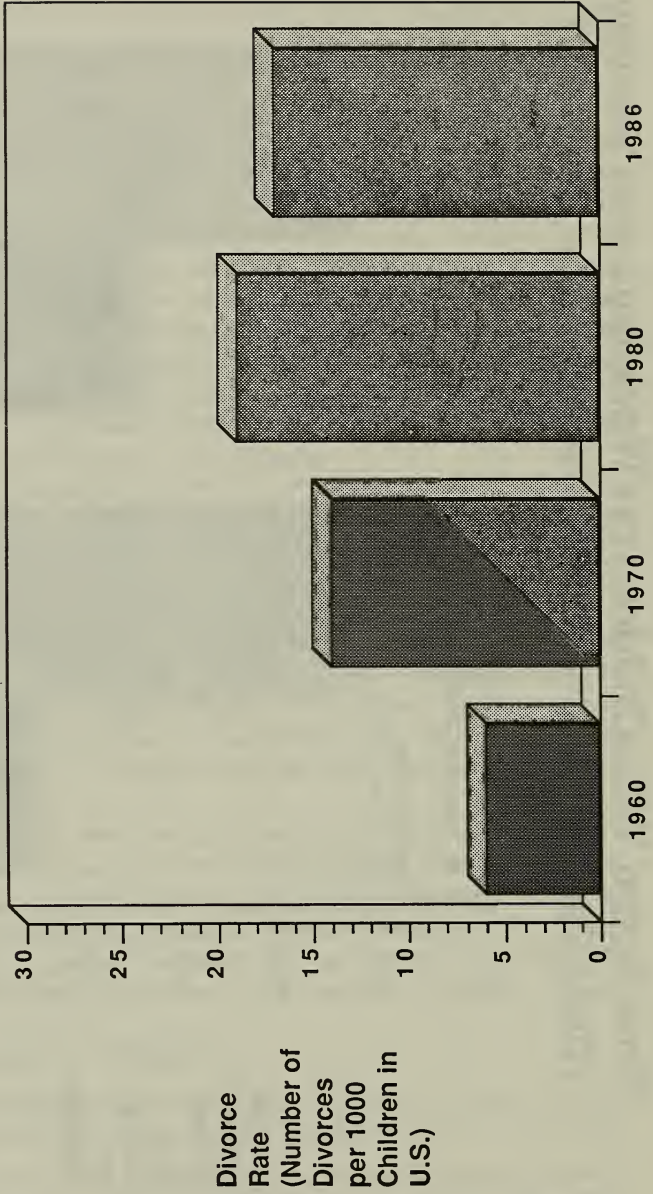
<sup>24</sup>Data for Chart 9 are from: U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Projections of the Population of the United States by Age, Sex, and Race: 1988 to 2080,” *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, no. 1018, Table G.

# Time Spent With Children on Workdays and Sunday (Dual Earner Family with Preschool Age Children)

Chart 5



# Divorce Rate in the United States: 1960–1986





over the last thirty years and two, to stir a healthy suspicion in the minds of church people about the kind of programming churches and denominations promote. Has the church adjusted to these changes in family structure? If so, are current efforts sufficient to reach, touch, and teach the pluriform American family of the twenty-first century? I do not have all the answers to these questions—but I do think that they must be raised. Otherwise, the religious establishment may greet a new century approximately 50 years behind.

As a sociologist and a churchwoman, I would like to suggest three major implications for the church. First, the church must redefine the notion of family. The normative, fifties' pattern of family is only applicable to a quarter of all American households. This means more than adding a few specialty programs for singles, the elderly, or single-parents. It means changing the whole picture.

About fifteen years ago, Peter Berger suggested that the church and the family were the primary "mediating structures" in modern life.<sup>25</sup> That is, the intimacy, nurture, and social support necessary to live healthfully in a fast-paced, largely impersonal, and urbanized world was to be found in the family and in the church. Current data suggests, however, that the family itself has become fragmented. So, what then? What institution remains where persons of all ages gather regularly for support, nurture, and resource-sharing? What institution remains where persons voluntarily commit time and effort to be in relationship with one another on some basis beside blood or marriage? The church may be that place—or it may not.

If the family is reconceived (literally) as pluriform, then the church may be the place where family is made. The fifties' programming goal of serving the family is turned upside-down. Instead of serving the family, the church must be in the business of "making family."<sup>26</sup> Programming directions that are responsive to the dilemma of the fragmented family must target the gaps in these fragile webs of social life and find creative ways of filling these gaps, strengthening these relational webs.

In fact, many of the fragments naturally go together. A widowed woman with no family nearby may provide needed richness and generational depth to a family with no living grandparent or no grandparent in tow. A single male might be the perfect "big brother" for a fatherless child. A group of empty-nesters with grandchildren faraway might reap mutual benefit from a year-long project with a preschool class. Or, dual-earner

<sup>25</sup>Peter Berger, *Facing Up to Modernity: Excursions in Society, Politics, and Religion*. (New York: Basic Books, 1977), pp. 130-141.

<sup>26</sup>Interestingly, Christiano found that the church *at present* does not function as a "family surrogate" for churched persons outside the traditional family. My contention is that the finding is not surprising because the church offers very little for these persons. What is germane in the Christiano study is the fact that unchurched persons in nontraditional families (singles, etc.) do seem to treat the church as a "surrogate." To fill the gaps in their shrinking social web, they do tend to "reach out" to the church. This finding adds confidence to the conclusion I am suggesting—that is, that the church *may be* a place where people "make family," although traditionally (and programmatically) it is not. Christiano, "Church as a Family Surrogate."

couples might blossom in a church school class with their younger children—not as teachers, but as co-learners. Or, a congregation might institute new rituals to mark significant life transitions other than birth, marriage, and confirmation. What about rituals to mark entry into a new job or career? to mark retirement? or widowhood (something beside a funeral for the spouse)?<sup>27</sup>

What's needed is a church-wide change in approach not just a few, experimental classes or activities. Obviously, every congregation is unique; depending upon its context, a congregation may have a larger concentration of one family type. I am not suggesting that a congregation in a traditional-family, suburban enclave cease to program for the traditional family. What I am suggesting is that congregations be aware that type of family is no longer the norm—and to rethink who they are, what they are doing, and who they are trying to reach. What family type does your church and/or denomination target (intentionally or not) through its activities and events, curriculum, rituals, and budget allocations?

So, first, the church must redefine the family. Second, the church must discover new and creative ways to “make family.” Third, the church must cease debating about whether or not people will come back to church when they have children. In fact, most research does show that some people *do* come back when they have children—and to our credit, they may come back because we have much to offer parents and their children.<sup>28</sup> This data indicates that the proportion of American households that are expected to “come back” is shrinking and will continue to shrink.

In the fifties, denominations programmed and competed for the traditional family. At that time, families were larger; the traditional family constituted almost half of the households in this country. Over the years, that proportion of the population has steadily decreased. Yet most denominations continue to program and compete for that same group. Little wonder that membership and participation have fallen off across the denominations (even evangelical denominations have experienced a slowing of growth).<sup>29</sup>

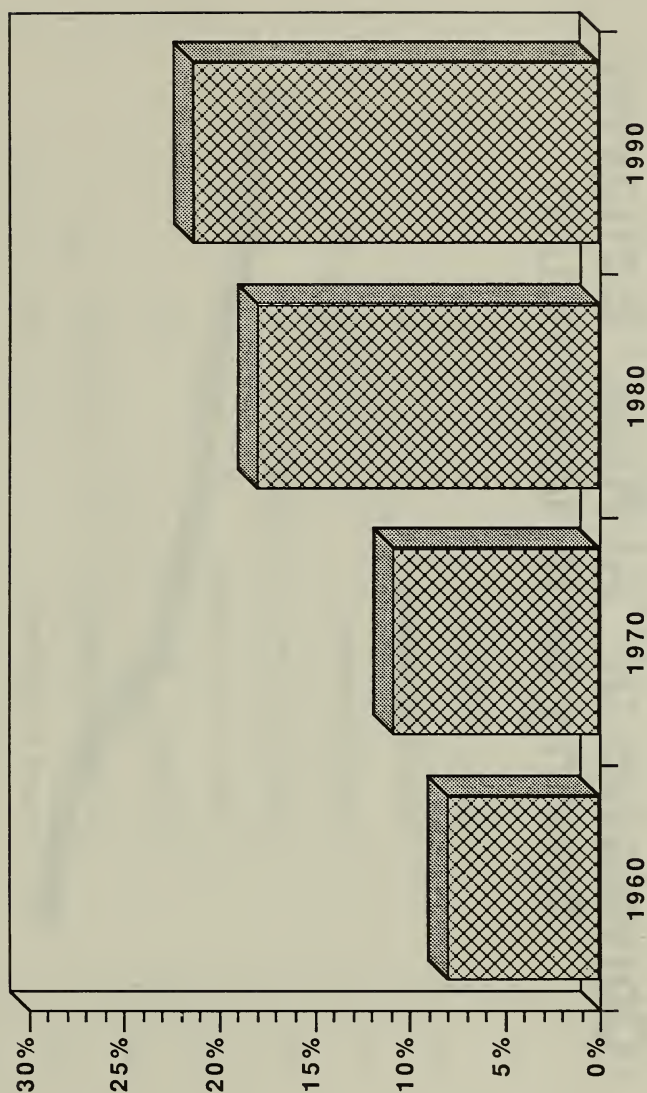
Has the church really offered very much for nontraditional families? Or, have religious leaders assumed that they were inconsequential, too hard to reach, or that they were coming back eventually anyway? Perhaps Americans continue to claim high rates of affiliation—despite consistent

<sup>27</sup>Joan Laird, “Using Church and Family Ritual,” in *The Church's Ministry with Families*, G. Garland and D. Pancoast, eds. (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1989), pp. 110-130; Edwin Friedman, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. (New York: The Guildford Press, 1985), pp. 162-190.

<sup>28</sup>Recent support for this thesis in relation to the return of the baby boomers may be found in David Roozen et al. “The ‘Big Chill’ Generation Warms to Worship: A Research Note,” *Review of Religious Research*, 31 (1990), 314-322. A review of previous research supporting a “Child-Rearing” theory of church commitment appears in: Wade Clark Roof and Dean Hoge, “Church Involvement in America: Social Factors Affecting Membership and Participation,” *Review of Religious Research*, 21 (1980), 405-426.

<sup>29</sup>For an overview of denominational membership statistics over the past forty years across a number of Mainline and Evangelical bodies, see Penny Marler and Kirk Hadaway, “New Church Development and Denominational Growth (1950-1988): Symptom or Cause?” in David Moberg et al. (eds.) *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. IV, Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1991.

## Percent of Children Under 18 Living with Mother Only

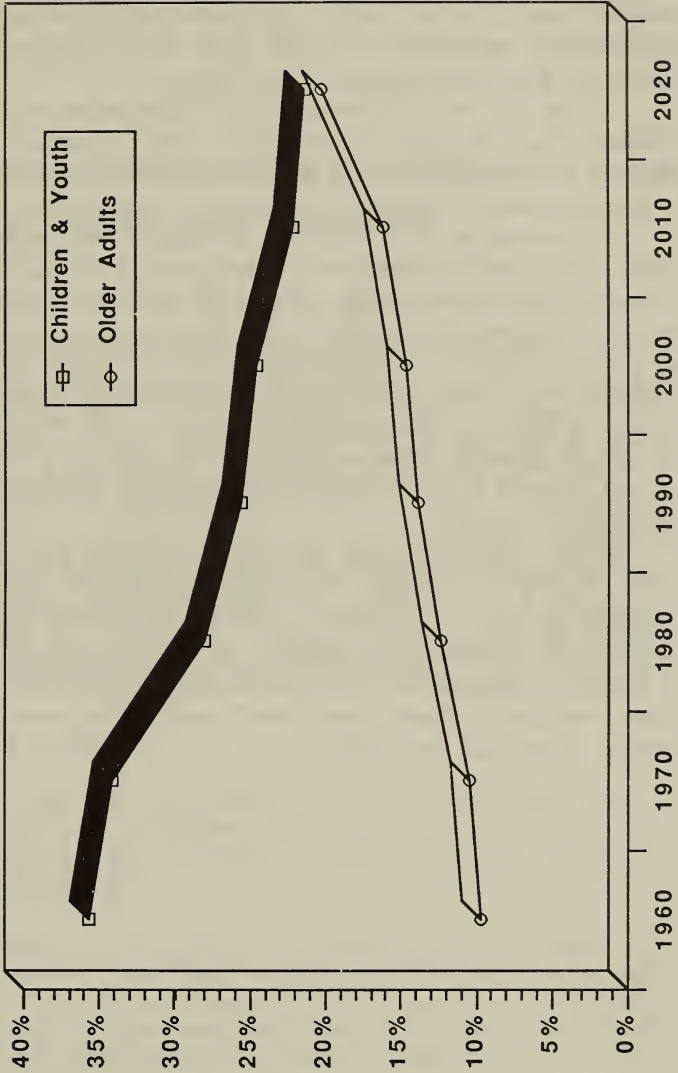


# Correlates of "At Risk" Behavior Among American Youth

Positive Family Life	-.39
Achievement Motivation	-.36
Parental Standards	-.36
Parent Involvement in Schooling	-.30
Positive School Climate	-.30
Self-Esteem	-.29
Educational Aspiration	-.29
Church Involvement	-.28
School Performance	-.27
Positive Peer Influence	-.24
Homework	-.22



# The Changing Age Structure of the United States: Children and Older Adults



declines in denominational tallies—because of the strong baseline faith that our good youth programs promoted in the fifties and sixties. But, the churches have not consistently kept (or held) many of these persons because they have not offered them very much.

Indeed, it is striking that the independent, mega-churches springing up around the country tend to offer a wide variety of programming for almost any kind of group.<sup>30</sup> While their programming resources are diversified, however, even these very large congregations tend toward age segregation. Specialization may attract more family types, but this program goal does not necessarily build bonds between those groups.

At the end of a discussion of this information with a Doctor of Ministry class, one student commented, “Well, it seems to me the real question is whether the traditional concept of the family *is* the ideal.” That is a very appropriate question—and a place to conclude.

In a review of New Testament teachings, David Garland states that Jesus’ words about the family are part and parcel of his understanding of the “coming crisis of God’s reign which would turn ordinary life on its head.” In that “revolutionary context,” the family no longer provides “true security, absolute trust.” Garland concludes that while Jesus did not hold a subversive view of the family, he did maintain that in the Kingdom of God the ties of blood and marriage alone were not enough. The ultimate source of intimate parenting, **Abba** relationships, are to be found in God. The will of God, Garland observes, can be done within and without the structure of the biological family.<sup>31</sup>

In the Christian tradition, the church *is* a family whose ties transcend those of blood and marriage. The biblical concept of church as family is especially germane in the modern American context. When ties of blood and marriage are fragmenting and changing, people are searching for other bases of intimate relating and sacrificial commitment. The church, I believe, can offer a new kind of family where blood, marriage and even ethnic ties are blessed, shared *and* transcended.

<sup>30</sup>Lyle Schaller, “Megachurch!” *Christianity Today*, 1990.

<sup>31</sup>David Garland, “A Biblical Foundation for Family Ministry,” in *The Church’s Ministry with Families*, in D. Garland and D. Pancoast, eds. (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1989), pp. 20-43.

# Constitutional Guidelines for the Military Chaplain Evangelist and Chaplaincy

**Rick D. Mathis**

I'd been an Army chaplain less than a year when the post chaplain called me to his office for a private meeting. He'd heard me preach the previous Sunday at my troop chapel. "Was it something I'd said?" I wondered. It was. "The gospel speaks for itself, Rick," he said. "Discussing differing ideas is okay, but putting down another religion to advance the gospel is not."

His correction, presented with warm caring and glad acceptance of my overall ministry, taught me that concern for religious pluralism requires more than lip service. I'd improperly used my military pulpit to advance my cause by directly attacking another religion. The content of what I said was at issue and properly so. As a military chaplain evangelist, I had not honored one of the constitutional realities, indeed requirements, of my workplace.

## Purpose and Thesis

This article seeks answers to the question, "What are the military chaplain evangelist's constitutional guidelines?" The answer to this question derives from another, which this article examines, "What are the military chaplaincy's constitutional guidelines?"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This article began as a few thoughts I wrote at the Chaplain Officer Advanced Course (CHOAC). I am indebted to Chaplain (MAJ) Don Troyer, my CHOAC small group instructor, whose encouragement resulted in my commitment to write the article. I am also indebted to constitutional attorney, scholar and author, John Whitehead, President of The Rutherford Institute, Charlottesville, Virginia, for providing research information.

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Chaplain (CPT-P) Rick D. Mathis, a former JAG Corps officer and member of the Minnesota State Bar, holds a J.D. from Northwestern University and an M.Div. from Asbury Seminary. His current duty is at the University of Virginia where he is pursuing an M.A. degree in clinical medical ethics. A Foursquare Gospel minister, Chaplain Mathis is endorsed by the National Association of Evangelicals.

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The Great Commission urges evangelists, among others, to embrace a both noble and passionate cause. Unfortunately, as my above experience suggests, some evangelists yield to a most invidious temptation—seeking to win the lost by assaulting other religions. And, many stories exist of those whose acts have sought to hinder the work of others' religions. I contend that such evangelistic myopia is *never* suited to the work of the chaplain evangelist.<sup>2</sup>

This article argues it is in the best overall interests of the chaplain evangelist to strengthen, rather than thwart, religious pluralism and free exercise rights. The argument proceeds by developing the Constitution's understanding of the military chaplain's workplace.

Three pivotal premises unite the discussion. *First*, the chaplain evangelist must be ever vigilant in defending religious pluralism, keeping the forums for ministry unclogged and available to all. *Second*, the chaplain evangelist must be a committed advocate for the free exercise of others' religious rights. *Third*, performing these necessary duties is in the best overall interests of both the work of the chaplain evangelist and the military chaplaincy.

## Constitutional Foundations of the Military Chaplaincy

*Give Me Liberty.* I'm not a universalist; all religions are not essentially the same. Yet, I agree with the Declaration of Independence "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, [and] that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." In general terms, people have the right to their religious beliefs and practices as a matter of God-given liberty. The Declaration of Independence merely states this truth.

As a chaplain I am pledged to do more than merely acknowledge the diversity guaranteed by this right. I am pledged to honor and to support the diversity, and to honor and to support others in following their religious beliefs.

*The first Amendment.* The Bill of Rights' framers understood God-given liberty in much the same way. In the First Amendment to the United States Constitution they wrote: "Congress shall make no law respecting an *establishment* of religion, or prohibiting the *free exercise* thereof." (emphasis added) These two clauses—the establishment and free exercise clauses—express the Constitution's guarantee of religious freedom.

What is the chaplaincy's constitutional authority? Most chaplains would say that the chaplaincy exists to guarantee the free exercise of military persons' religious freedoms. This is true. What is also true is that the chaplaincy exists as an historical exception to the establishment clause's prohibition that Congress shall not pass laws which establish one religion over another.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Hereinafter, the term "chaplain evangelist" refers to a *military* chaplain evangelist.

<sup>3</sup>An example of an historical exception is *Marsh v. Chambers*, 103 S. Ct. 3330 (1983), where the United States Supreme Court upheld Nebraska's paying the salary of a chaplain to



This exception has a profoundly reasonable basis in history. Michael W. McConnell points out that the Constitution's framers wrote the First Amendment during a period of tremendous religious turmoil. They did not intend to foster an ecumenical spirit. Rather, they believed that allowing each sect to promote its own cause with zeal would make religious oppression by one group over another impossible. Quite intentionally, the framers drafted a First Amendment which embodied James Madison's thinking.<sup>4</sup>

"The Madisonian perspective points toward pluralism, rather than assimilation, ecumenism, or secularism, as the organizing principle of church-state relations. . . . The happy result of the Madisonian solution is to achieve *both* the unrestrained practice of religion in accordance with conscience (the desire of the religious "sects") *and* the control of religious warfare and oppression. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

What does this mean for the chaplaincy and the chaplain evangelist? Chaplains exist to maintain a healthy religiously pluralistic environment in the military in addition to ensuring individuals' free exercise rights.

## A Challenge to the Military Chaplaincy's Constitutional Foundations

For some years the chaplaincy has warned against bringing in outsiders—clergy and laypersons—to minister, out of concern that such action might put the chaplaincy's constitutional basis in jeopardy. The concern resulted directly from *Katcoff v. Marsh*, a 1985 federal court of appeals decision.<sup>6</sup>

In *Katcoff*, two Harvard law students argued that the Army chaplaincy was an impermissible government establishment of religion in violation of the Constitution's Establishment Clause. The Second Circuit in rejecting their argument found the chaplaincy necessary to avoid depriving "... the soldier of his right under the Establishment Clause not to have religion inhibited and of his right under the Free Exercise Clause to practice his freely chosen religion."<sup>7</sup>

The Court created quite a stir in the chaplaincy by *suggesting* that the chaplaincy might not be necessary (or constitutional) in large urban areas where civilian clergy and facilities were as available to soldiers as to other nonmilitary citizens. The Army chaplaincy reacted to this suggestion by seeking to curtail civilian clergy involvement.

The Constitution conceives an even broader basis for the chaplaincy

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offer prayers in its legislative assembly. The Court stressed "the unambiguous and unbroken history of more than 200 years" of prayers in legislatures by federal and state governments from the Framers to the present. It noted that since the republic's founding, "the practice of legislative prayer has coexisted with the principles of disestablishment and religious freedom". Id. at 3333.

<sup>4</sup>McConnell, *The Origins And Historical Understanding Of Free Exercise Of Religion*, 103 Harv. L. Rev. 1410, 1515-1516 (1990).

<sup>5</sup>Id.

<sup>6</sup>*Katcoff v. Marsh*, 755 F.2d 223 (2nd Cir. 1985).

<sup>7</sup>Id. 755 F.2d at 234. The *Katcoff* Court did not rely on the Supreme Court's historical exception reasoning articulated in *March v. Chambers*. See note 3, *supra*.

than *Katcoff*; military chaplains exist for two reasons: to protect religious pluralism and to protect free exercise rights. These reasons often require chaplains to bring in outside help, whether in garrison, in training or in combat. *Katcoff* acknowledged these two reasons:

“The primary function of the military chaplain is to engage in activities designed to *meet the religious needs* of a *pluralistic* military community, including military personnel and their dependents.”<sup>8</sup> (Emphasis added.)

But, the Court didn’t understand the implications of military pluralism for ministry. It didn’t understand that protecting religious pluralism and free exercise requires chaplains to take all actions necessary, whether in garrison, training or combat, to protect those rights. Often this requires civilian help, even in large urban areas.

The *Katcoff* Court’s suggestion that chaplain ministry might be removed from installations in large urban areas would oppose the clear intent of the Constitution’s founding fathers. It would *secularize* the installations rather than maintain them as places where religious pluralism flourishes.

## The Chaplaincy’s Workplace—Ministry Forums

People cannot make speeches or picket on a military installation’s streets, sidewalks, or parks like they can in a traditional public forum. The military installation has a special status. But, “when a specified portion of a nonpublic forum has been deliberately opened for certain expressive activities, the forum becomes accessible to ‘other entities of similar character.’”<sup>9</sup> Constitutionally speaking, military chaplains work in various ministry *forums*.

What would happen if military authorities decided that only military chaplains may conduct services on military installations? The rule would potentially keep individuals from freely exercising their religious rights by unconstitutionally suppressing the availability of the “worship forum.”

The military chaplaincy has created many other forums for exercising religious freedom. Some examples include: the prayer breakfast forum, the Bible study forum and the retreat forum. When the military chaplaincy makes a ministry forum available, the forum becomes available to all. The forum can be reasonably regulated as to time, place and manner, but not as regards content.<sup>10</sup>

Practically speaking, some forums are beyond the chaplaincy’s means, as with religious broadcasting, except for religious programming on Armed Forces Radio and Television. Thus, if a group sought chaplain assistance to start up a religious broadcast, the forum need not be opened.

Finances, often linked to a faith group’s size, *may* serve as a realistic, permissible restraint to a group’s access to some forums. Assume that a particular faith group could fund a religious broadcast. Constitutionally

<sup>8</sup>Id. 755 F.2d at 226.

<sup>9</sup>Whitehead, John W., *The Rights Of Religious Persons In Public Education*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway books, 1991), p. 70, quoting *Perry Education Association v. Perry Local Educators’ Association*, 460 U.S. 37, 49 (1983).

<sup>10</sup>See generally, Whitehead, *The Rights Of Religious Persons In Public Education*, p. 68.

speaking, without considering the requirements of chaplain fund regulations, the military chaplaincy wouldn't be required to fund another faith group which argued it had equal access rights to a religious broadcast. Equal access to some forums doesn't mean equal funding.

On the other hand, allowing access to some forums may require equal funding. Chaplain funds often finance worship forums where the collections are wholly inadequate to provide for essentials like an organist or worship supplies. Should they do this? Yes. In the military context, religious pluralism and free exercise require the chaplaincy to keep the "worship forum" unclogged and open to all. Events like retreats and dinners, less central to the worship forum, should be governed by a faith group's ability to pay for them.

## **Religious Pluralism—Keeping the Forum Unclogged and Open To All**

As a law student in the windy city, I walked the crowded, busy streets of Chicago often encountering street preachers. I was a young Christian, excited about winning souls. At first, I'd stop and watch, intrigued by the street preachers' urgent, persistent labor for the gospel. Over time I found myself avoiding many of them. Why? Because in the preaching I often heard disparaging comments directed at the "false and deceiving" religions of others.

I grew angry, not toward the other religions, but toward the street preachers. If their behavior caused me, a believer, to shun street preachers, then what impact did it have on nonbelievers passing by? The next time a nonbeliever saw a street preacher, even one who didn't assail other faiths, what would he or she likely do?

The street preachers I've described "clogged" a forum for ministry—street preaching—making the forum less accessible for others to use as a means of preaching the gospel.

I misuse a forum available for the exercise of religious faith when I attack another's faith in that forum. I injure that person and religious pluralism. The forum is potentially clogged and less open for the proclamation of the gospel.

The same problems develop if I fail to keep the forums available for exercising religious faith open to all. Doing this doesn't mean that Protestant prayer breakfasts become ecumenical prayer breakfasts, but if the Catholics or the Muslims want a prayer breakfast, I am there to facilitate their request.

My own faith isn't threatened. How can it be? In Christ I am wholly accepted. My real security and significance are grounded in my relationship with Jesus Christ. Protecting the rights of others' faiths doesn't require me *not* ardently to believe my own cause.

There is no threat to my ministry. By ensuring that others have equal access to those forums available for the exercise of their religious faith, I am preserving those forums for my ministry. As long as a forum is unclogged and available to the gospel, my Bible and my experience show me that the gospel can well compete in that forum. I am free to practice and proclaim



the good news as I understand it, without concern for constitutional or practical reprisal.

## A Hypothetical Lawsuit

Imagine a lawsuit involving a chaplain whose denigration of a religion within a ministry forum legally injured a plaintiff. For example, a Catholic military teenager attends a Protestant Youth of the Chapel (PYOC) Bible meeting. While speaking at the meeting, a chaplain evangelist denigrates the Catholic faith in his or her attempt to evangelize. The Catholic youth prays a sinner's prayer and later refuses to accompany his parents to mass. His dependent parent sues.<sup>11</sup>

Bad cases make bad law. This case is bad because its facts cut out the heart of the argument that the chaplaincy exists to ensure the good health of the military's religious pluralism. In the hands of a federal court, such a case could do great damage to both the chaplaincy and the gospel.<sup>12</sup>

*Discomfort Is No Test.* Several years ago, while I was a prison chaplain, two Pentecostal ladies faithfully came to my weekly Protestant prison services. One of the ladies, Jean,<sup>13</sup> would pray with many of the prisoners after my services. Some of those prisoners would be "slain in the Spirit" while she prayed, resulting in their lying on the floor in a relaxed state.

Admittedly, I've had some reservations about this type of ministry because of its abuses. But, Jean's ministry attracted many prisoners who seemed greatly strengthened in their faith. The Bible says there will be diversity of ministries (1 Corinthians 12:5-6). In spite of my discomfort, I allowed Jean to engage in her ministry. After leaving my work there, I heard the story that a later chaplain literally locked Jean out of the prison, preventing her access to the prisoners. He didn't believe in her ministry. Most prisoners stopped coming to his service.

Assuming the story's truth, if this chaplain viewed Jean's ministry as satanic or was uncomfortable with it, I can understand keeping it *separate* from his worship service. But, he worked with prison officials to lock her out of a legitimate forum for ministry. There were other times available for meetings. The prisoners wanted those meetings. He disregarded religious pluralism and may have violated the prisoners' free exercise rights.

## An Extreme Case—Satan Worshipers

What happens when a group seeking to worship satan desires a military chaplain's help? Assuming that a worship setting separate from consecrated chapels and equipment can be found, what is the military chaplain's

<sup>11</sup>In most cases, a servicemember may not sue the military.

<sup>12</sup>To clarify, the chaplain evangelist's denigrating words are the subject of judicial scrutiny.

<sup>13</sup>Not her real name.



constitutional responsibility? It is to keep the forum for worship open by helping the satan worshippers to obtain their place of worship.<sup>14</sup>

Does this assistance advance satan's interest? To the chaplain evangelist's thinking and many others', yes! Yet in a constitutional framework, by keeping the forum for worship available to all, the gospel will have those same forums ever available for its preaching.<sup>15</sup> If nonbelievers are already in satan's clutches, as many believe, then how will those nonbelievers be helped by oppressing satanic faiths; only the gospel can help them. Concerning fears that satanic faiths might possibly engage in dangerous and illegal behavior, laws exist which govern criminal behavior. Chaplains cannot argue that they have a preventive law enforcement role.

Sure, there are trade-offs, but a chaplain evangelist can make more positive impact for the kingdom of God than those opposed to the gospel can in hindering the gospel. Why? It is because of the gospel, which "... is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes."<sup>16</sup>

Military pluralism requires the military chaplaincy to keep the forums for ministry unclogged. They may not be used to attack any specific religious group which is a part of the Army's unique diversity. Military pluralism mandates that if a forum is available to one religious group in the Army, then other groups, no matter how morally reprehensible they may be, must also have access to the forum. Size of the group may be a factor regarding location or time, but the group has access.

## Free Exercise—Advocating Others' Religious Rights

*A Crucial Distinction.* I have discussed the constitutional mandate to keep the forums for ministry unclogged and open to all as a matter of religious pluralism. Sometimes, though, this requirement is a free exercise issue. In my prison ministry example, the chaplain didn't harm Jean's free exercise rights; she could exercise her faith outside the prison walls.

However, the prisoners could not. The chaplain may have violated their free exercise rights. Why? Because Jean's ministry had become part

<sup>14</sup>That satanic groups seem unlikely to emerge in large numbers within the military does little to calm my personal discomfort over the prospect of even one military chaplain having to respond to such a request. However, to the chaplain who argues that his or her faith precludes assisting the satanists (ostensibly, a "free exercise" claim being made by the chaplain), where would granting such an exception lead? How many religions could potentially be excluded from chaplain assistance by sensitive chaplain consciences?

The office of "the chaplain" includes the constitutionally mandated function of protecting religious pluralism. I am aware that the Constitution's framers could never have conceived that the chaplaincy would aid a satanic faith, but if their argument for protecting religious pluralism is to have any principled meaning today, then chaplains are compelled to assist everyone.

<sup>15</sup>Consider the statement, "People never pray during prime time." Prime time television is a clogged forum. Religious pluralism is suppressed in prime time. Secularism or at best, ecumenism, is the honored religion. Is prime time a forum available to the proclamation of the gospel? Hardly!

<sup>16</sup>Romans 1:16 (NIV).

their religious practice, and it was available to them. The military's needs didn't keep Jean from ministering to the prisoners; the chaplain's religious beliefs did.

*The Essential Question.* Free exercise asks, "What is the proper worship forum (manner, place, time) within which one may exercise one's faith?" Other than where the claim is a "sham," free exercise doesn't ask, "Is this religious act proper?" For example, when a Muslim seeks to pray during the duty day and military authority resists the requests, free exercise asks, "May duty time serve as a proper forum for this Muslim service member to exercise his faith's prayer requirements?" It doesn't ask, "Is this Muslim's need to pray five times a day a proper need?"

Whether duty time is the appropriate worship forum requires weighing conflicting interests. Balancing these conflicting interests isn't easy, as the following Supreme Court cases demonstrate.

## The Supreme Court Speaks in *GOLDMAN* and *SMITH*

*Goldman v. Weinberger.*<sup>17</sup> Air Force Captain Goldman, an Orthodox Jew and ordained rabbi, was court-martialed for wearing a yarmulke while on duty and in uniform contrary to an Air Force regulation prohibiting the wearing of headgear while indoors. Captain Goldman, a clinical psychologist, claimed that the regulation prevented him from wearing his yarmulke, infringing upon his freedom to exercise his religious beliefs.

Did the Supreme Court allow Captain Goldman to wear his yarmulke? No. The Court did not require the military to accommodate Captain Goldman's religious practice in the face of the Air Force's view that it would detract from the uniformity sought by dress regulations. The Court gave military regulations special deference.<sup>18</sup>

The Court refused to apply the "compelling government interest" ("strict scrutiny") standard used then to evaluate free exercise claims which conflicted with state and local laws. Had the Court followed this test, the headwear regulations would be unconstitutional unless the Air Force proved that they were necessary to further a compelling government interest.<sup>19</sup> The

<sup>17</sup>475 U.S. 503 (1986).

<sup>18</sup>Our review of military regulations challenged on First Amendment grounds is far more deferential than constitutional review of similar laws or regulations designed for civilian society. The military need not encourage debate or tolerate protest to the extent that such tolerance is required of the civilian state by the First Amendment; to accomplish its mission military must foster instinctive obedience, unity, commitment, and esprit de corps." Id. 15 507. "[J]udicial deference . . . is at its apogee when legislative action under the congressional authority to raise and support armies and make rules and regulations for their governance is challenged." Id. at 508, quoting *Rostker v. Goldberg*, 453 U.S. 57, 70 (1981).

<sup>19</sup>*Sherbert v. Verner*, 374 U.S. 398, 406 (1963). See also *Thomas v. Review Bd. of Indiana Employment Security Div.*, 450 U.S. 707 (1981); *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, 406 U.S. 205 (1972). Using this test it seems highly unlikely that Goldman's claim would have been denied. After all, what compelling government interest would be undermined by wearing a yarmulke? Uniformity of dress is hardly compelling unless the mission involves infiltrating a Nazi hospital!

Court instead found that the regulations were a rational means to further a legitimate Air Force interest—uniformity.<sup>20</sup>

*Employment Division, Oregon Department of Human Resources v. Smith*.<sup>21</sup> A private drug rehabilitation firm fired Smith and Black for using peyote. Peyote is an hallucinogenic drug under Oregon law. Smith and Black had used it under very tightly controlled circumstances for sacramental purposes at a ceremony of their Native American Church. In *Smith*, the Supreme Court permitted Oregon to prohibit sacramental peyote use and thus to deny unemployment benefits to persons discharged for such use.

The Court stunned the organized religious world by doing away with its long-established “compelling government interest” test. Instead, the court announced a new rule, that an individual must obey a law which incidentally forbids performing a physical act that his belief requires if the law isn’t specifically directed to religious practice<sup>22</sup> and is constitutional as applied to all.

*Goldman* and *Smith* erode the fundamental right to freely exercise religious faith. This constitutional right forms a fundamental pillar which supports the chaplain evangelist and the military chaplaincy’s existence. Constitutional attorney William Bentley Ball observed of *Smith*, “The court’s opinion is strikingly cold in reference to religion. The tone is entirely one of limitation and curbing, as though the free exercise of religion is a danger to be closely confined.”<sup>23</sup>

*Smith*’s erosion has practical implications as well. Congressman Stephen J. Solarz’ warns of its impact on American religious life.

“The implications of this ruling are staggering and extend far beyond the concerns of Native American religions. Minors may no longer be permitted to participate in religious rituals involving wine. Jews and Moslems whose religions mandate religious slaughter could be unable to obtain religiously sanctioned foods under broadly written animal welfare legislation. Those religions that require special articles of clothing or strict standards of modesty could be penalized by workplace and schoolhouse dress codes. Even the practice of ritual circumcision could be outlawed if certain elements viewing the procedure as unnecessary prevail on state legislation to ban it.”<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup>*Goldman*, 475 U.S. at 506, 510

<sup>21</sup>110 S. Ct. 1595 (1990).

<sup>22</sup>The Court stated, “It would be true, we think (though no case of ours has involved the point), that a state would be ‘prohibiting the free exercise [of religion]’ if it sought to ban such acts or abstentions only when they are engaged in for religious reasons, or only because of the religious belief that they display. It would doubtless be unconstitutional, for example, to ban the casting of statues that are to be used for worship purposes or to prohibit bowing down before a golden calf.” *Id.* at 110 S. Ct. 1599.

<sup>23</sup>John W. Whitehead and James J. Knicely, “Religious Freedom Restoration Act: Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing?” (Charlottesville, VA: The Rutherford Institute, 1991), p. 1, quoting Tyner, *Is Religious Liberty A ‘Luxury’ We Can No Longer Afford*, 85 Liberty No. 5 (1990), pp. 2, 7.

<sup>24</sup>Solarz, *The Court’s Erosion Of Religious Freedom*, *Newsday*, August 23, 1990, as quoted in Whitehead and Knicely, *id.* at 2. They predict that “churches or private Christian schools with doctrinal objections may be required to hire gay persons under discrimination laws prohibiting decisions based on ‘sexual preference;’ public school students might be required to attend sex education classes with no provisions for excusal; religious sermons on political issues could prompt revocation of church tax exemptions; and doctors and nurses in public hospitals might permissibly be fired if they refuse to perform abortions.” *Id.* at 2.



One need not be a soothsayer to understand the potential complications for the military. A military installation located in a state with such laws might find itself subject to enforcing a general law which infringes upon religious freedom.

*Goldman* and *Smith* may weaken the military chaplaincy's constitutional argument that it exists as a defender of the free exercise of religious faith. As the constitutional right to freely exercise religious faith decreases, so too does the girth of the chaplaincy's "free exercise" pillar diminish.

The organized religious community hastily reacted to *Smith*, seeking legislation to restore the pre-*Smith* judicial standard in free exercise cases.<sup>25</sup> The military chaplaincy need not react as hastily to *Goldman/Smith* as did the civilian religious community, but it must seek with vigilance to protect free exercise rights.

## Military Necessity

The breadth of the chaplaincy's constitutional authority to seek the protection of free exercise rights is more limited now. Yet, at least in the Army, soldiers have more free exercise protection than the United States Supreme Court requires. The regulatory standard is "military necessity." When religious practice and the Army's mission conflict, a commander must decide whether to accommodate the soldier's request in view of the mission's "military necessity." The military necessity standard seems closer to the old "compelling government interest" test than to a *Goldman* and *Smith* test which approves orders or regulations of general application which are rationally related to a legitimate military or state interest.

Top-level military decision makers are constitutionally at liberty to write the military necessity test out of their directives and regulations. This must not happen. Free exercise rights are too important. In their advocacy of free exercise rights, chaplains must sensitize all military decision makers to the importance of free exercise rights by modeling the honoring of soldiers' religious values and belief systems.

*The Chaplain's Role.* What is the chaplain's role in the proper balancing of free exercise claims which compete with the mission? As a defender of religious rights, the chaplain has a duty to inform military persons about their free exercise rights. Yet the chaplain isn't a blind advocate. The chaplain is tasked with helping determine whether a religious practice is genuine or merely a sham. The moral or theological truth of a person's belief or practice isn't the issue. The practice can be strange, even annoying. The sincerity of the individual's belief is the issue.

The chaplain's advocacy of a person's rights is limited, yet vital. The

<sup>25</sup>Congressman Solarz of New York introduced the Religious Freedom Restoration Act ("RFRA") in the United States House of Representatives (H.R. 5377) on July 26, 1990. Presently, the RFRA solution appears to be in trouble for sound reasons outside this discussion. Whitehead and Knicely's article provides an excellent discussion of the several problems inherent in the RFRA. It suggests several alternatives which include amending the RFRA, allowing the process of constitutional adjudication to proceed without the RFRA, or looking to state courts and state constitutional amendments to advance religious liberty.



chaplain doesn't function as an attorney. His or her advocacy of a person's rights is limited in that it includes clarifying both the military person's free exercise and the Army's mission.

Many persons, trapped in the tension between faith needs and Army mission, cannot exercise their free exercise rights without chaplain intervention. I remember the prisoners who needed a Muslim teacher and the Hindu trainee who needed religious books and a place to worship. Until I came along, the system had resisted their free exercise requests. Without my intervention their religious needs would have gone unmet.

To clarify, the fact that the system resisted their requests made them free exercise issues. Had the system merely asked me to help meet the prisoners' and trainees' needs, then religious pluralism would have been at issue. The distinction is important because it speaks to the two pillars which undergird the chaplain evangelist's ministry and the entire military chaplaincy—religious pluralism and free exercise.

Can a chaplain evangelist still be true to the gospel, while ensuring that the needs of Muslims and Hindus, among others, are met? The question is answered by his or her office as a military chaplain. Constitutionally, the chaplain evangelist *must* ensure that the needs of all are met. If the chaplain evangelist believes that the gospel prohibits obeying this requirement, then he or she must seek employment outside the military.

## Conclusion

The constitutional guidelines for the chaplain evangelist and the chaplaincy are the same. Constant vigilance in defending religious pluralism and advocating free exercise rights is their primary responsibility. Both will benefit from eagerly embracing this responsibility because they'll be constantly strengthening the constitutional pillars which undergird faith and their very existence in the military.

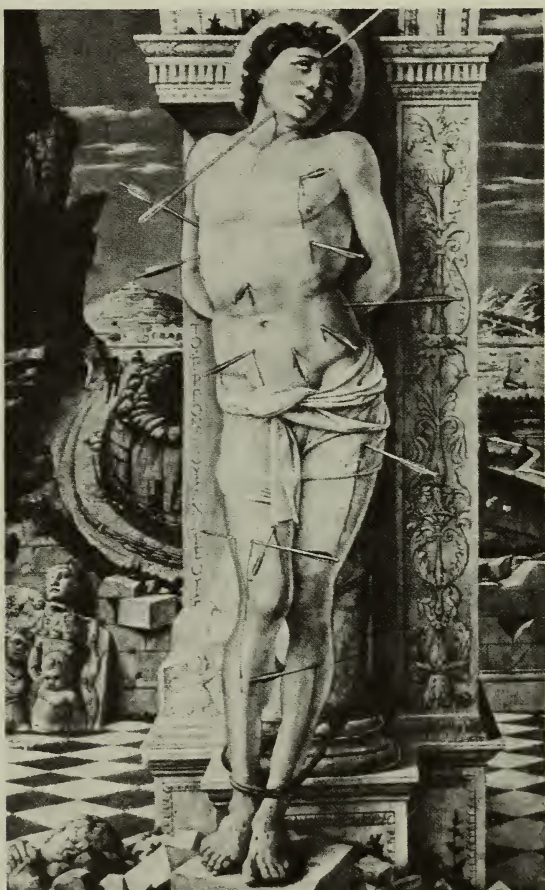
The chaplain evangelist will benefit because the forums for ministry will remain open for the preaching of the gospel. Should the day ever come when evangelistic preaching of the gospel is a minority religious position, the chaplain evangelist will yet have access to the forums.

As the free exercise pillar diminishes in girth, the chaplaincy must emphasize its other constitutional pillar—religious pluralism. Military chaplains are incorrect in asserting that their "free exercise" role justifies the chaplaincy's historical exception to the constitutional prohibition against congressional establishment of religion. The exception finds its roots in protecting religious pluralism, not free exercise.

Finally, to those military chaplains who would argue that the Constitution requires fostering a spirit of *ecumenism* rather than religious pluralism within the military, beware. The founding fathers' intent was to prevent majoritarian religions from crushing minority religious views. In adopting James Madison's perspective, they sought to protect religious pluralism, not to achieve a universal religion.

# If you think being a Christian is inconvenient today, just look back 1500 years.

If you're ready to make the time and commitment that being a Christian sometimes requires, our church invites you to come and join us in the worship and fellowship of Jesus Christ.



# Conversion Within The Faith Community

Thomas P. Sandi

The restoration of the Catechumenate, known as the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) in the Roman Catholic Church, has generated much discussion in theological circles. More than any other reform of the Second Vatican Council, it touches the heart of who we are as believers, how we are supposed to live by faith, and the implications of that ongoing self-transformation that should be characteristic of the follower of Christ.<sup>1</sup> The intentional, public initiation of new adult members into the Faith Community requires a renewed and critical look at conversion, that fundamental aspect of faith that challenges the believer to carefully survey the landscape of personal commitment to oneself, to others and to the Other, with a view toward expanding horizons.

## A New Self-Assessment

The dozen years that have marked the study of the provisional text of the RCIA were exciting, rather threatening to many, and certainly interesting ones for the Catholic Community. Teachers, parishioners and inquirers—all were faced with the unsettling notion of ongoing transformation and radical

<sup>1</sup>See Lise Holash, *Evangelization, the Catechumenate, and Its Ministries* (Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Co., 1983). "The RCIA embodies very nearly the entire vision of the Church and the sacraments which was articulated by Vatican II. To put it bluntly, it blows the whistle on many theological suppositions which have governed our Catholic religious lives for more than a millennium" (p. 37).

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reorientation that Christian conversion requires of true believers.<sup>2</sup> Coming to terms with the powerful reminder that the mystery of human awakening to divine love is rich, so rich that our understanding of it—not to speak of our existential living of it—can never be exhausted. It meant seriously reassessing the very foundation of faith, the nature of humanity and God's plans for the increase of the Kingdom.

The Christian person is one in whom God is present and active through grace, one in whom there yet exists an ongoing battle between good and evil. Conversion is a process of re-awakening, reaffirmation, and reorientation that again and again calls the believer to authentic human consciousness. This consciousness, to be all that the person was created to be, is something that is offered to all humankind. Not confined to intellectual or objective propositions, this process primarily has to do with one's relationship with the Christ and with one's self-consciousness. Christological and anthropological in nature, it also affects ecclesiology, as Christians best come to know who they are and what they are about in community.

No simple definition of the conversion process has ever been posited on which theologians agree, though a recent rediscovery of biblical foundations is contributing to its critical description.<sup>3</sup> Conversion has always involved reorientation of priorities, growth on different levels of maturity, and transformation of self and social structures in response to a call. For the person who chooses to live by faith, conversion is not only an active term; it's a verb!

## Biblical Foundations

The idea of conversion in the Scriptures is an important one, although there is no distinct, focused doctrine as such in either Testament.<sup>4</sup> In a sense, God's word encountering humanity can be captured by the notion of conversion—God's summons and the free-will assent of the created. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the term *shub* ("return") refers to turning back to someone with whom one had a previous relationship. A specifically religious character is seen in its usage between Yahweh and God's people.<sup>5</sup> The dramatic confrontation between God and the Israelites involves a mutuality of turning—away from that which separates and towards that which connects. This conversion is an ongoing occurrence, positively intermittent, as biblical individuals embody the need for the nation to become faithful to the Law and Temple worship once again. The Hebrew prophets, in particu-

<sup>2</sup>See Regis Duffy, *On Becoming a Catholic* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984). "The biblical image of conversion as a 'walk' captures the change in such listeners to God's word. They should all walk in a new way, having heard God's message and seen his future, the Kingdom" (p.45)

<sup>3</sup>Walter Conn's book on conversion is a scholarly study of Christian conversion that draws synthetically from present-day psychology, philosophy, and theology to interpret this experience. Walter Conn, *Christian Conversion* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987).

<sup>4</sup>See Michael Dick, "Conversion in the Bible" in Robert Duggan, *Conversion and the Catechumenate*, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1984), pp. 43-63.

<sup>5</sup>Deuteronomy 30, for example, speaks about the present acts of conversion fueled by past experiences—all aimed at a better relationship in the future.



lar, call God's people to justice, mercy and love, to a self-awareness and responsibility that is foundational for their personal lives, their communities, and their national life.<sup>6</sup> As the creative Word encounters Israel again and again, God marks a scintillating path of disorientation, reorientation, forgiveness for failures, and the intervention of Love itself. When the Word becomes flesh in the person of Jesus, this summons to a return to conscious journeying with the Lord becomes more insistent than ever.<sup>7</sup>

The very first challenge of Jesus' ministry was "Be converted!" (Mt. 4:17; Mk. 1:15). He called all who would listen, to a radical re-orientation towards himself.<sup>8</sup> *Metanoeo* ("convert") and *epistrepho* ("turn to")—both verbs, as was *shub* in the Hebrew Scriptures, implying a process—emphasize the cognitive and volitional aspects of the conversion experience for New Testament believers. Now the change that is proclaimed centers around humanity's movement, God having taken the momentous step of Incarnation. As well, universality is foundational in the Christian Testament as all persons are called to turn and be saved.<sup>9</sup> Conversion here means turning toward Christ and away from everything that is opposed to him.

Throughout the bible, three constitutive parts of conversion may be delineated: (1) humanity is alienated from God, (2) God initiates the process of reorientation, and (3) humanity must respond in thought, word and deed to the offer of unconditional love. The imagery of "journey" reoccurs often as conversion is perceived as a life-long commitment to development within and around the believer.

## Our Tradition

Throughout Christian history, the community of believers has expanded on the nature and requirements for true conversion:

1. Only through the grace of God is one enabled to know, desire and do what s/he knows must be done for salvation (this against the Pelagians).
2. God's grace is necessary even for the "beginnings of faith" (this against the Semi-Pelagians).
3. It is necessary that a person be converted to his/her ultimate end by the action of the first Mover, which actuates what is already present in the human being—infused habit (Thomas Aquinas).
4. The human acts that individually, or at least implicitly, are present in the process of conversion are dogmatic faith, filial fear of divine justice, hope, and "beginnings of love," and repentance (Council of Trent).

<sup>6</sup>Amos 5:4, 14-15; Jeremiah 8:4-5; Hosea 6:6.

<sup>7</sup>See Conn, p.215, for a discussion of Jesus himself serving as a paradigm for conversion.

<sup>8</sup>See Michael Dick, pp. 54-56 for a discussion of Luke's emphasis on a longer wait for the return of the Lord and therefore a need to appropriate a long-term attitude toward turning and returning from within the Community.

<sup>9</sup>Matthew 3:2, 4:17; Mark 1:15.

All in all, over this lengthy period of development of dogma, the Church clearly sees the obvious: God initiates, mankind cooperates and finds meaning and purpose.

Giants of the Christian tradition from Augustine to Thomas Merton to Oscar Romero illustrate a movement, a search, a quest for ultimate meaning in their lives. Some struggled with good and evil (Augustine), others with sin and forgiveness (Luther), others with selfishness and obedience (Ignatius of Loyola), and still others with dependence and autonomy (Thomas Merton). Christian heroes have always been men and women of deep contemplation and commitment; their goal, transforming action for the world in which they lived. Cognitively, affectively, and volitionally, these seekers were moved to act out new values and virtues in a radical and certain manner, although they were not always aware of the process at the time. A Vincent de Paul and a Mother Teresa serve the poor; a Dorothy Day acts out mysticism on the streets of New York; a Thomas More and an Oscar Romero, longing for the quiet life of contemplation, become the most public of persons by surrendering their lives for what they believe.

In any age, living out the demands of the Christian life means being converted over and over again through a rich and often difficult developmental process of coming to terms with the summons to authentic being and action. The Second Vatican Council spoke eloquently about the need of the Church to preach the Good News to believers and non-believers alike "so that all men may know the true God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent, and may repent and mend their ways."<sup>10</sup> The Fathers of the Council further state conversion is a "beginning of a spiritual journey from the old man to the new one, perfected in Christ" and that this "transition, which brings with it a progressive change of outlook and morals, should manifest itself through its social effects."<sup>11</sup>

## Karl Rahner

Karl Rahner, one of the most influential thinkers of twentieth century theology, sought to uncover human experience and meaning in his "transcendental theology." The primary objective of this new way of doing theology is to provide a Christian interpretation of human existence—to point out what we already know, what is implicit in our existence. What one discovers is that we are oriented beyond ourselves, toward infinity and absolute being. When we are most aware of ourselves, we are most completely in the presence of God! The beginning of religion is one's acceptance of him/herself as a radically open and transcendent being. Rahner, considering conversion in this picture, sees it as a fundamental decision, a turning to God which is "a response made possible by God's grace to a call from God."<sup>12</sup> A person's basic freedom, to say "Yes" or

<sup>10</sup> "Constitution on the Liturgy," No. 9, Walter Abbott, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1965).

<sup>11</sup> Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, no. 13, *ibid*.

<sup>12</sup> Karl Rahner, "Conversion" in *Encyclopedia of Theology*, K. Rahner, ed. (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), p. 292.

“No” is never merely a choice between objects; rather, it is the choice for self-realization in the direction of God or a radical refusal of salvation.<sup>13</sup> Rahner defines conversion as “the religiously and morally good fundamental decision in regard to God, a basic choice intended to commit the whole of life to God. . . .”<sup>14</sup>

One of the greatest contributions of Rahner’s transcendental theology is his emphasis on freedom, which is uncovered over a person’s lifetime. He speaks of uncovering this as the total project of a person’s lifetime. The “proof” of the resolute and radical choice for redirection of the believer is quite simply “radical and selfless love of neighbor, which in its very origin and source, reaches God too.”<sup>15</sup> This contemporary view of conversion as a free, personal, and action-centered experience, reminds us of the very conscious and deliberate act that defines it. One “knows” when one has experienced the “summons to change” and subsequently, so does everyone with whom the believer comes into contact, so “fundamental” is the change.<sup>16</sup>

This liberating grace of God is at work for all who would accept it, and thereby live by faith. The very act of responding to the call to authenticity is itself a summons of self-communication by God, which imposes obligations of love. At the same time, it liberates the believer from those “enslaving worldly idols of one’s mortal fear and hunger for life,”<sup>17</sup> which heretofore have dominated his/her life. The only “possession” for the converted is the Possessor,<sup>18</sup> urging one not to accomplish something or learn formulae, but to “live his (her) life as an act of unconditional love to God and his (her) fellow man (woman). . . .”<sup>19</sup>

Rahner summarily speaks of conversion as (1) faith, “a concrete concern about the call and as the obedient reception of its content”; as (2) hope, “trusting oneself to the unexpected, uncharted way into the open and incalculable future in which God comes”; and as (3) love for neighbor, “because only in conjunction with this can God really be loved. . . .”<sup>20</sup> Obviously, for Rahner, conversion is a life-long process that is filled with new beginnings and renewed fidelity, as persons come into contact with the “Holy Mystery” to which his/her whole spiritual and intellectual being is oriented. Unlimited possibilities are present in the power of God’s gift of grace to those who risk all and turn to follow Jesus to death and ultimately to Life without end. As for the “end product”—whether or not we are being faithful Christians—God alone will judge.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Kress quoting Rahner in Robert Kress, *A Rahner Handbook* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), p. 92.

<sup>14</sup>Karl Rahner, “Conversion,” p.292.

<sup>15</sup>Karl Rahner, as quoted by Robert Kress, *A Rahner Handbook*, p. 53.

<sup>16</sup>See Conn, p. 201, for a discussion of the conscious, deliberate, experiential reality of personal conversion.

<sup>17</sup>Rahner, “Conversion,” p. 292.

<sup>18</sup>See Rahner’s “Prayer to the God of Knowledge,” as quoted by Kress, p. 55.

<sup>19</sup>Rahner, *Theological Investigations IX*, p. 126.

<sup>20</sup>Rahner, “Conversion,” p.292.

<sup>21</sup>Karl Rahner, “I Believe in Jesus Christ,” in *Our Christian Faith*, Karl Rahner and Karl Weger, editors (New York: Crossroads, 1981), p. 160.



## Assumptions and Critiques

Some theological presuppositions that underlie this view of ongoing conversion touch the human, psychological, faith, ecclesial and evangelical dimensions of life experience:

1. Because of human questions and divine initiatives, we all long to move beyond ourselves in our search for truth, meaning and a better relationship with the Creator.
2. Reawakening, reaffirmation and reorientation are natural, commonplace, somewhat uncomfortable, and predictable. This is true with human beings, organizations, societies and communities of nations.
3. Authentic Christianity requires a constant inner search within the believer who grows and develops in relationships.
4. Conversion occurs in a variety of ways along "the Way." It occurs dramatically, in a clearly identifiable manner, but more often, gently and subtly within the Faith Community through development processes.
5. Authentic conversion experiences typically lead to a new sense of mission and evangelization as the believer moves from disciple to apostle to disciple etc., stretching beyond him/her to new horizons of belief and living. It is action-oriented.

This approach to the conversion experience might be faulted on several points. It has strong *developmental underpinnings* that deal mainly with adult believers. There is the implication of *several conversions* as opposed to the steady, sure development of the one "earthquake" experience of coming to the faith. There is also the notion of *public manifestation of the Faith* which flows from a pro-active view of the Community of Believers, and the de-emphasis of the *purely intellectual components* of the conversion experience. Finally, one can recognize the strong *Rahnerian approach* which insists on moving from human experience to the divine in our search for meaning. Still, it offers much for those who seek a dramatic movement in their faith-lives.

## Towards A Meaningful Journey

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults has presented the post-Vatican II Church with a wonderful opportunity for introspection, revivification and recommitment. The ongoing conversion that is implied by the theological underpinnings of the Initiation document, and the subsequent thinking that has flowed from its study and use, urges deeper reflection on who and what the Christian is, and on where and why she/he is going on her/his journey of faith. In any case, Christians have the opportunity to take the Gospel message of ongoing repentance and reform more seriously than ever perhaps by "abandoning rather aimless and unsatisfying perspectives in exchange for a new and more promising incentive to live a more meaningful life."<sup>22</sup> A new tomorrow is waiting for the believer who never ceases to desire and

<sup>22</sup>Hugh T. Kerr, *Conversions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.). p. IX.



embrace life-giving conversion, that is, live by faith. The ever-expanding horizons of meaning are within our sight today; what we do with that vision here and now is in our hands and God's.

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## Evangelism In the Ranks

**Gil A. Stricklin**

“Bring God to soldiers and soldiers to God” has been the agreed-upon mission of all military chaplains since the establishment of the Chaplain Corps in the Army more than 200 years ago. However, there is an on-going debate on how to accomplish the assigned mission.

A growing number of evangelical chaplains believe with deep conviction that the assigned task is accomplished through a zeal for evangelism—proclaiming Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Master.

Most agree that not since World War II, and possibly not in the entire history of the U.S. military, has there been such evidence of evangelism, through preaching, as occurred during the days of Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Possibly as many as 10,000 U.S. soldiers were converted to the Christian faith in only a few months.

The chaplain’s evangelistic thrust in the military goes back much further than the last months of 1990 and into 1991. For the past decade, there has been sporadic mushrooming of fresh spiritual interest among both Guard and Reserve soldiers, as well as in regular Army units. Even though it cannot be proven, for no known official surveys or polls have been taken, it seems that when a spiritually motivated chaplain is deeply dedicated to living a holy life in God, and gives herself or himself to prayer and evangelistic activities, religious renewal in that unit is experienced.

Individual soldiers coming to a personal faith in Christ, evidenced by new character and conduct, is an increasing norm in the military today. Chapel attendance has increased in some units by 400 percent in only a few months—the result of prayer, evangelism, biblical preaching and individual witnessing by unit ministry teams.

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Chaplain (Colonel) Gil Stricklin serves in the US Army Reserve as the Senior Hospital Chaplain of the 94th General Hospital (1,000 beds) in Mesquite, Texas. His civilian ministry is Senior Corporate Chaplain, and CEO of Marketplace Ministries, Inc., of Dallas, an ecumenical organization which provides chaplain services to business firms. He is a Southern Baptist clergyman.

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Whether an evangelical chaplain is newly commissioned in the military, or has been serving for three decades, the free exercise of religion means sharing Christ as the Savior of all people.

Chaplain (1LT) Donald E. Sides, 5th Battalion-112 Armored Regiment, 49th Armored Division, Texas Army National Guard, is one of those newly commissioned, evangelical chaplains who believes every Christian is an evangelist—a proclaimer of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Gospel.

According to Chaplain Sides, evangelicals believe every person who has not had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ by faith where they invite Christ to come into their heart, seek forgiveness of his or her sins and receive Christ as Savior and Master, is “lost.” He further explained that lost men or women are those who have not experienced “New Birth” and a life-changing faith commitment.

“Evangelism is seeking to exhort lost people to accept Christ, to be saved from the consequences of sin, with the assurance that their sins are forgiven and they have eternal life now and forever with God,” he said.

Chaplain Sides’ evangelism activities are styled toward a one-on-one approach through counseling and seeking to help people with needs.

“Many times when soldiers come to see me for counseling, they have a perceived need,” he said. “However, the greatest need is to have a personal faith, and a purpose and power for living through Jesus Christ.”

He continued, “I seek to help with any need the individual soldier articulates, and out of helping them, I share Jesus Christ and the Gospel with them. Often they have a desire, a hunger to know God in a personal way.”

Some 75 percent of his unit’s members do not have a relationship with any religious organization, or church, according to Chaplain Sides. It is this group he tries to reach with his witnessing and preaching.

Chaplain (COL) Roy N. Mathis, staff chaplain, Training and Doctrine Command, headquartered at Fort Monroe, VA., pointed out there is a vast difference between proselytizing and evangelism, the first forbidden, the latter encouraged.

“We strongly discouraged the idea of proselytizing,” he said, “for this is simply trying to get one soldier or family member to change from one denomination to another. We don’t want that—but evangelism is totally different.”

This senior chaplain, who holds one of the top five or six leadership slots in the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps, believes evangelism is seeking to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with soldiers and their families who do not have a faith, a church association or commitment to any religious organization.

“For more than two and a half decades I have practiced evangelism in the Army,” he said. “I have seen literally thousands of individuals—both men and women—soldiers and civilians, generals and privates, dedicate their lives to Christ through an expressed personal faith.”

“Evangelism has been the heart and soul of my military service,” added Chaplain Mathis.

Also, he pointed out it is the responsibility of every military chaplain to uphold the “free exercise of religion,” but that it is usually done in the passive sense.



Chaplain Mathis believes that there must be a more active role in this practice as well.

"You see this in our chapels when offering Communion," he said. "We have a variety of ways to express this act of worship. We offer both wine and grape juice. We pass the serving plates and cups. Also, we encourage people to come forward to the chaplain or priest. We allow them to kneel at the altar, or stand. This is the way we should do it. That is right."

However, he believes that when it comes to evangelism, and providing a means for people to respond to the Gospel message as it is taught and preached, we fail in this "active role of free exercise."

"Many chaplains don't allow an opportunity for worshippers to respond at the end of a general Protestant worship service in our chapels or at reserve and guard drills," he said. "We leave out a large segment of people whose backgrounds require their 'free exercise,' too," he explained.

"Many protestants have a tradition of coming forward in a church to make their decision for Christ, fill out a decision card for the minister, or ask to talk privately with the minister," Chaplain Mathis said. "We should do the same, and it should not be strange or unusual for public invitations to be practiced in Army, reserve or guard worship services."

From all indications that is being done more and more, but some individuals see it as "Elmer Gantry-sawdust trail-evangelism." Some critics say public evangelism practices are "lower class, anti-intellectual and hypocritical."

Personal evangelism and pulpit evangelism go hand-in-hand, according to most evangelical chaplains.

"I make it a common practice to preach the Gospel 'at my worship services,'" said Chaplain Sides, as he reflected on his ministry with the Texas Guard. "I'd guess three out of four sermons have a clear call to experience salvation in Jesus Christ."

He added, "every time I preach, I ask people to respond, to make a public decision, a faith commitment, and to invite Christ into their lives."

"I've closed every worship service I've led by giving an invitation, to exhort people to act on what they have heard and felt in mind and heart," continued Chaplain Sides, "and I plan to continue."

An Army Reserve Chaplain, Chaplain (CAPT) Jerry Creek, presented Chaplain Sides with an innovative suggestion to ask for a decision in a reserve/guard chapel. He asks for all heads to be bowed, then asks those who want to receive Christ as Savior to raise their head and look at the chaplain until recognized. CH Creek then leads in a prayer of repentance, rededication or general spiritual help as reflected in his sermon and invitation.

Chaplain Sides is not alone in his enthusiasm for evangelism. There are many seasoned chaplains like Chaplain (LTC) Jay Breland, former Marine Corps enlisted man who fought in Vietnam, and recently served on active duty in the U.S. Army in support of Operation Desert Storm when his reserve unit was mobilized.

Chaplain Breland, assistant hospital chaplain, is assigned to the 94th General Hospital, a reserve medical unit headquartered in Seagoville, Texas. He said he sees little encouragement for evangelicals to practice evangelism

in the military. However, Chaplain Breland knows of well over 1,000 individual soldiers who committed their lives to Jesus Christ during his 18 years in the Marine Corps and Army. He practiced evangelism as an enlisted Marine in Nam, and often directed Protestant services when a chaplain wasn't available.

After becoming a chaplain in the USAR in 1978, he had continued his strong emphasis on evangelism both personally and through his preaching.

"When soldiers know you believe that anyone can experience God in a personal way, they will seek you out, asking how to experience salvation," he said.

He told this to a private, who asked him during annual training, "how do I become a Christian?"

Chaplain Breland said, in a simple and concise way, how the young soldier could receive Christ as Savior and Lord. The soldier prayed, inviting Jesus into his life. He made a faith commitment and was willing to turn from the sins of his old lifestyle, according to Chaplain Breland.

It was a Catholic Chaplain, at the Army Chaplain Center and School, that has been the strongest voice of encouragement for Chaplain Breland to practice evangelism in the military.

"Do evangelism in the Army, because we need it," the priest told him, "Don't ever do anything else, don't be anything else except an evangelist—do evangelism."

"I'll never forget his words," Chaplain Breland said, and from all indications, he hasn't.

Breland's unit is one of those in the USAR where the Command Master Religious Program (CMRP) is carried out by the authority of the commander in support of the staff, and it is a unit ministry team effort. The results have been impressive.

Attendance at worship services has increased from 10 or 15 soldiers to more than 130 each drill. Approximately 120 soldiers have registered public decisions for Christ at the close of general Protestant services in the last six years. Some 22 prayed to receive Christ last year alone, and at every drill for two years, at least one soldier was converted.

The chaplains of the 94th General Hospital are often called upon to do ministry between weekend assemblies. Funerals and weddings, along with counseling, are regular opportunities of ministry, and more often than not, they don't occur on official duty time. Personal, unpaid ministry time is given by most officers in the USAR unit, and the chaplains often lead the way.

Ministry by the UMT is a key influence when it comes to training and carrying out the hospital mission. The UMT was "front and center" when the hospital mobilized. Hundreds of pastoral counseling cases were a part of their ministry, as the unit departed for Europe, to back-fill hospitals in four countries. In it all, evangelism was certainly an important ingredient, according to the hospital chaplains. Some 12 unit members accepted Christ as Savior prior to departing for overseas. Desert Storm was a climax for evangelism, and hundreds of evangelical chaplains were used as part of God's evident work among U.S. forces.

An Army Chaplain who saw evangelism first-hand was the Command Chaplain, Central Command, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Chaplain (COL) David P. Peterson. He was responsible for overseeing the ministry of nearly 700 multi-service military chaplains. Chaplain Peterson now is the staff chaplain for Forces Command, Fort McPherson GA.

He calls for the “clarifying of roles” for those who practice evangelism in the military. Chaplain Peterson says that to clarify the role of evangelical chaplains, they must “be true to our calling in this total area (of evangelism).”

“Those of us who come from an evangelical background need to be true to our God, true to our denominations, true to our church,” he said, “and this means evangelism.”

Chaplain Peterson added, “I have tried to practice evangelism in my entire 26 years career in the Army. However, I have to admit there have been times when I was too timid.”

He explained that evangelical chaplains need to “get over our timidity and at the same time marry together all our concepts in a pluralistic society (Army).” It was his idea that evangelicals in the Army Chaplain’s Corps need to emphasize their personal traditions, the way other faith groups do in the U.S. Army today.

“That is the calling all of us,” he continued, “to be true to our beliefs, and certainly to our historic traditions.”

Chaplain Peterson said he is oftentimes asked if “altar calls” can be extended in General Protestant Services. He said he answers by saying, “Yes, of course you can!” But he admitted that there are times when it is a sensitive issue.

“Supervisor chaplains and senior chaplains need to provide guidance, support and encouragement to younger and lower ranking chaplains for evangelism,” he declared.

Chaplain Peterson pointed out that what he saw take place in an evangelistic effort during Desert Shield/Desert Storm hopefully will continue.

“That would certainly be supported by myself,” he emphasized, “and other senior chaplains, too.”

One young Marine Corps fighter pilot, a Captain, was recently led to Christ by an active duty Army chaplain at a hospital in Europe. The Marine came there to have his leg healed, but according to him, “got my soul healed too!”

“I want to tell you one thing,” the pilot told the Army chaplain, “and that is—thank you.”

The Marine said he believed the Holy Spirit used the Army chaplain to introduce him to Jesus Christ, after God directed their paths to cross in the hospital.

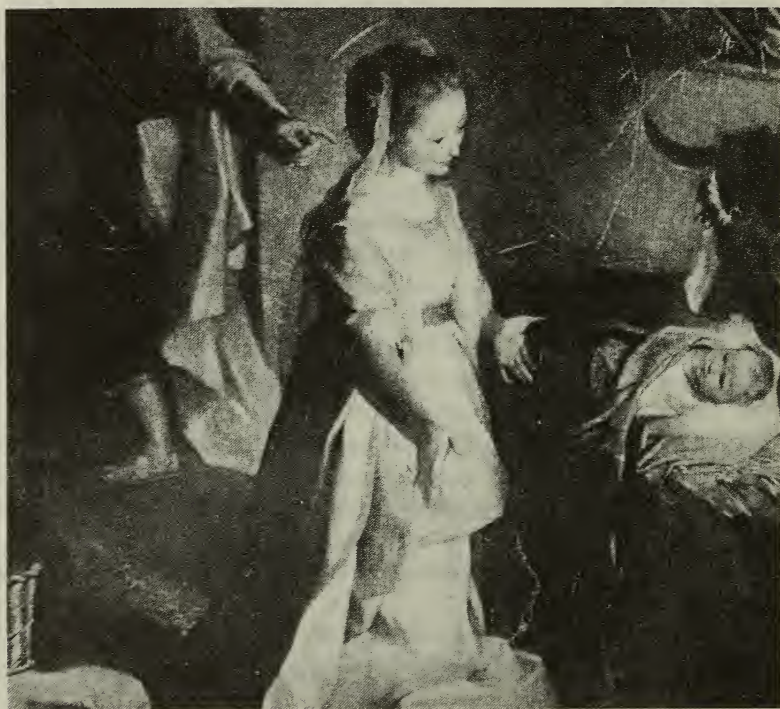
“You helped me open my heart to the Word of the Lord,” the recent Marine convert told the chaplain. “I thank you again, and I’ll always thank the Lord for you, and your help to make this world a better place.”

Maybe that’s what Biblical evangelism in the ranks is all about . . . making new men and women, so that they will make this world a better place, and have an eternal home in the hereafter.



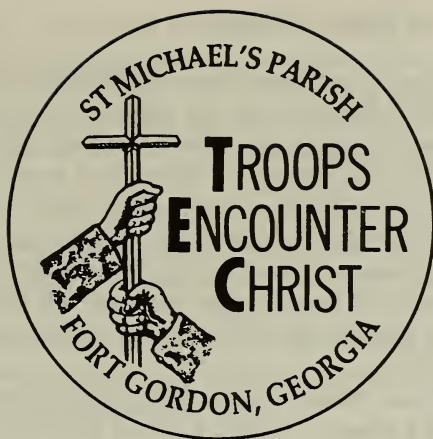
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## Troops Encounter Christ

**Christopher W. Welch**

### **Fort Gordon soldiers invade Aquinas High School!**

Well, not exactly, but something unusual has certainly been going on of the past three years at Chapel #9, the Catholic Center, at Fort Gordon, Georgia. Every three months, on a designated Friday, a military bus pulls up to Chapel #9, and picks up its final load of 40-60 young, single Catholic soldiers who board the bus with looks of anxiety and apprehension mixed with enthusiasm and eagerness. Dressed in civilian clothes, looking very much like the young teenagers they are, sporting mod clothes, chewing gum, and plugged into walkman radios, these young soldiers are willingly embarking upon a mission that cannot elsewhere be described by DA, TRADOC or FORSCOM. Incognito-soldiers, whose mission will begin on Friday evening and end on Sunday afternoon, are making their way to Aquinas High School where they will bivouac for the weekend. An advance party of soldiers and volunteers have already arrived and set up mission control and camp in the school library. They have claimed the cafeteria, classrooms, conference rooms and the chapel as their nerve center and have begun to entrench for the weekend. Their mission is not to encounter the enemy. It is to encounter a Friend. The code name for this mission is TEC, an acronym signifying *Troops Encounter Christ*.

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LTC Christopher Welch (USA, Ret.) was a psychotherapist and nurse consultant at D.D. Eisenhower Medical Center at Fort Gordon, GA. Currently he teaches at the Medical College of Georgia, and is active in the Catholic Parish and the Troops Encounter Christ program at Fort Gordon. He holds a Ph.D in Human Behavior.

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## **Roots of TEC in Youth Ministry**

This dynamic program is borrowed from a concept that originated in 1965 out of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and was designed for teenagers. Since its inception, TEC, for Teens Encounter Christ, has been offered to thousands of teenagers throughout the country on weekends of encounter and community. TEC is designed to enable the young person to live what he learns and frees him from the frustrating experience that comes from traditional classroom learning situations. The TEC(ite) involves himself and herself in the mystery of salvation as they live their weekend with Christ in a situation that psychologically understands and works with the mystique of adolescent thinking and behavior.

In 1987, Chaplain (Major) Charles Gunti, OFM Troop Chaplain at Fort Gordon, summoned a group of interested layman and active duty soldiers, to explain to them the concept of TEC. Father Gunti had worked with TEC while assigned in Europe and became enthusiastic about the creativity and latent spirituality of young soldiers. It did not take long for him to communicate his enthusiasm to the group of volunteers who had gathered to learn about this unique and strange concept called TEC. Overnight, the TEC phenomenon grew at Fort Gordon. With only a few modifications the content was kept the same but in place of Teens, Troops was inserted and TEC became known as Troops rather than Teens Encounter Christ.

There is a clearly spoken byword or phrase that is common among TEC supporters: TEC cannot be explained, it must be experienced! TEC is not an encounter weekend in the sense understood in the 70's. It is not a T-group, nor a self-discovery group, retreat, prayer weekend or communications seminar. It is not, strictly speaking, a religious or meditative experience. What is it? Well, as mentioned, it must be experienced to be explained.

## **TEC at Fort Gordon**

The TEC experience begins with the young, single (sometimes married) soldier signing up for the weekend through the Catholic Chapel at Fort Gordon. Generally, over 100 soldiers sign up but through attrition, weekend duty, and other military obligations, 50-65 soldiers attend. The ideal number of participants is about 45, but the popularity of TEC and the support of commanders has spread, and many young, AIT soldiers are anxious to engage in this weekend that rumor control says is an incredible experience. Soldiers generally sign up after the troop mass at 1100 or through briefings given by the troop chaplain. An official letter is then sent to each soldier and to each commander requesting release for that weekend. The letter of instruction directs the soldier where to meet for the pickup by the military bus and what personal items to bring. They are not given any specifics about the weekend except for logistical information. The TEC experience is funded through appropriated funds and does not cost the soldier anything.

Arrangements are prearranged with the Principal of Aquinas Catholic High School, the only Catholic High School in Augusta, to use the school

for the weekend. The school has many appealing features including a cafeteria, a gymnasium, classrooms, conference areas, and of course, a chapel within the school itself. Also it provides a retreat-like atmosphere with pleasant grounds away from the military milieu. Throughout the entire TEC experience, the soldiers are given no schedule nor are they briefed on what to expect. Indeed, a frequently given directive by the lay director is to "participate, don't anticipate!" To enforce this maxim, the concept of time is minimized. The school clocks are covered, and the TEC(ites) must hand over their watches, walkmans and secular reading for the weekend, receiving them only after the closing ceremony. In fact, no one wears a watch including the table leaders. The only personnel wearing watches are the lay directors and spiritual director. The collecting of watches and radios always elicits good-humored groaning and joking.

## **Arrival at the Site**

At the appointed time, shortly after the entire TEC team—oftentimes consisting of 35 people—have celebrated Mass, the bus pulls up to Aquinas High School and discharges 50-60 anxious and wary soldiers, completely mystified about what to expect. To allay their anxiety, a considerable amount of joyous welcome is provided by the TEC teams who personally greet each soldier with a hand shake and a welcome, and escort them to the group conference area where five to seven large round tables have been set up. After being seated, the spiritual director gives a brief welcome and turns the weekend over to the lay director who orchestrates the entire weekend in a highly organized, if not complex, schedule that carefully fills in every moment of the weekend with carefully programmed activities called experiences. The TEC weekend, recognizing ego identity problems, strives to enhance and uplift the importance of each participant. This goal is carefully spelled out in a banner within clear view: "TEC soldiers are VIP's!" Each soldier is directed to come up to the podium, and using a microphone, introduces himself with "Hi, my name is Bill." Before he can nervously mouth another word, with prompted, but soon spontaneous enthusiasm, a chorus of 50-60 soldiers and 35 team members, reverberates with an echoed: "Hi Bill!" Bill is then required to say what unit he is from, hometown, why he came to TEC and what he hopes to get out of TEC. When finished, a wave of applause clearly identifies Bill as a very important person. And so this process continues until all 50-60 soldiers have personally identified themselves and have been given overwhelming group acceptance. That illusive but important ego enhancer called recognition and affirmation, quickly settles in and the initial apprehension and wariness has been dissipated almost immediately.

After the soldiers have introduced themselves, the TEC team, oftentimes consisting of 35 people, do the same. Soon, these anxious soldiers have been bonded to the team in an enviable sense of camaraderie and community that promises only to get more intense as the weekend progresses.

The next maneuver is again devised to strengthen cohesion as well as lessen comfort zones that may foster seclusiveness and safety which prevents



community. Soldiers who are from the same unit or who may know each other, are separated and assigned to tables where the table members are essentially strangers to them. By the end of the TEC encounter, the cohesion and bonding that has been established by each soldier at each table, facilitated by the TEC table leaders, results in a metamorphosis that is a joy to behold!

Again, in a ploy to establish uniqueness and singularity, each table decides on a name by which they will be identified, and that name is transferred to a carefully drawn sign. Table #1 is now officially, "The Saints," or some other name that identifies the uniqueness or mission of each table.

## **The TEC Team**

The TEC weekend is not a loosely organized set of pious exercises put together by devout and well-intentioned lay persons. On the contrary, it is soundly and theologically based with a heavy liturgical emphasis that centers around the death, resurrection and mission of Christ with strong application to young Christian lives—young soldiers, living Christian lives.

Father Matthew Fedewa and Sister Concetta, of the Diocese of Lansing, Michigan, drew up and structured the original TEC liturgy for the Loyola University Pastoral Institute in 1965. Their impetus was challenging and meeting the needs of Christian youth in a manner that did not alienate them from their faith, but rather bonded them to it while still allowing and accepting the uniqueness of youth and their boundless energy. TEC relies on a lay director and a hand picked team of intelligent, devout and energetic Catholics who comprise every facet of an active ministry to include active duty soldiers, retired soldiers, dependent wives and dependent husbands as well as former TEC candidates who remain on beyond their AIT to become permanent party.

## **Intensive Advance Preparation**

The intense preparation for a TEC weekend begins approximately six to eight weeks before the actual weekend. Weekly meetings, chaired by the lay director, appoints committees, assigns talks to meditations, oversees registrations and coordinates with a host of other committees to facilitate the smooth operation of a weekend that has as its purpose, the spiritual formation of a large number of soldiers. Throughout the weekend, approximately eight talks are given by lay persons. These "talks" are based on previously designated subjects that are mandated by the TEC program. Those who are assigned to give the meditations are given guidelines and are required to present their rehearsed talks to the lay director and spiritual director to see that they conform to the guidelines and address the critical concepts outlined. Sermonizing, preaching and giving homilies is strongly discouraged. Rather, the talks are meant to be experiential and nonthreatening while at the same time challenging Christian formation and growth within an adolescent mind and clearly wedded to the concept of God can be served,



and Christ discovered, through the naturally emerging adolescent goals of naturalness and spontaneity. After the talks, the table leaders (two assigned to each table of eight candidates) leads the soldiers in discussion of the talk for about eight to 10 minutes. Nothing is left hanging. A talk or mediation without discussion and personal application is seen as only meeting half of the needs of the soldiers. Unless they can apply what they have heard, and openly discuss the implications, the meditations lose their impact. The talks are meant to address some of the moral and ethical dilemmas of young people as well as some of the answers for those dilemmas. By self-reporting, the speaker is able to identify with the common anxieties of youth and also present them with genuine alternatives and problem solving techniques within the light of Christian formation.

Friday evening is referred to as "Die Day," because it focuses on the passion and death of Jesus as well as the mystical concept of dying to one's self. This is the only segment of the weekend that is essentially "heavy." The talks focus on the paschal mystery, metanoia and the suffering of Christ within the context of redemption. Very subtly, the distance of the resurrection is addressed and alluded to, to give a reprieve that Saturday morning is not far away. The candidates are instructed to retain the meditative spirit of Friday evening by maintaining silence until the awakening bell on Saturday morning. To facilitate this reflection, the final experience of the evening has the candidates focus, in a darkened room, on an illuminated image of Jesus knocking on the door, while an appropriate reading is given.

The soldiers are then directed to the sleeping areas of the school previously prepared by team members. Classrooms are designated for male soldiers and female soldiers and sleeping cots and sleeping bags have already been prepared for them. After the soldiers have been "put the bed," the team meets in the library to review the experiences of the evening and to receive assignments from the lay director. It is oftentimes well after midnight. The team sleeps in the school just as do the candidates, and can be found scattered throughout the small high school getting ready for Saturday morning. Those giving talks on Saturday may be consulting with the spiritual director. The lay director is consulting with his assistant regarding logistical issues. The music ministers are rehearsing music liturgy for the next day. The Wheat Team director is giving last minute instructions to his/her team and already setting up for breakfast the next morning. After the team meeting, in between generous yawns, the spiritual director gives a final prayer and blessing and silence sweeps over this multitude of almost 50 people giving them a brief reprieve from an exciting day.

Saturday morning arrives and the team, awakened much earlier, is busy attending to last minute details. The assistant lay director, also referred to as the Bell Ringer, travels up and down the darkened classrooms switching lights on and ringing bells. The soldiers have about 30 minutes to shower and get ready and to silently meet in the chapel for prayers at 8:00 A.M. To enhance the meditative spirit, hymns are played softly over the PA system as the soldiers tend to their morning ministrations. The initial thought might be that this playing of hymns over the PA system is a bit too much. No soldier has ever complained. This gentle way of fostering

reflection is a welcome relief from the blare of bugles and first sergeants shouting directions at zero dark hundred.

Even the chapel has been logistically altered to facilitate community. The pews have been removed and the soldiers sit lotus-style on a carpeted floor or leaning against the three walls of the chapel. Morning prayers also involve community participation while the soldiers alternate prayers back and forth in a choir-like fashion designed to get everyone involved.

The Saturday morning liturgy becomes uplifting and joyous and a phenomenon occurs that cannot be fully measured or analyzed. Aside from the real and latent spirituality that is surfacing, another growth takes place that is called community in the truest sense of the word. The reticent, introverted soldier, not accustomed to sharing or interacting, feels safety and acceptance as the radiance and love of Christ is reflected in his comrades and specifically the team members who give unconditional acceptance to each soldier at his or her table.

Saturday morning the rays of the dawn of the resurrection slowly and imperceptibly penetrate the liturgy as well as the mood of the candidates and team. After breakfast the candidates return to the group area where the focus begins to single out the prodigal son mystery. Consistent with the richness of Catholic liturgy, the soldiers are taught the concept of metanoia and forgiveness. They are asked to write on a piece of paper their faults, sins or obstacles that prevent them from fully knowing Christ and which get in their way of growing and seeing Christ in their fellow soldiers. These folded pieces of paper are then collected and burned in a brazier and each soldier is then signed with the ashes. Later on, symbolic of brotherly love and acceptance, they wash the ashes off of each other's forehead thus formally ending "Die Day" after the sacrament of reconciliation.

The liturgy at this point takes a dramatic turn. Since we are now celebrating the joyous mystery of the resurrection, music is introduced and singing takes place at meal times as well as an introductory greeting to each speaker.

And so the weekend continues, not with repetitive meaningless devotions, but with sharing and interacting and a highly credible and digestible Catholic Christianity that considers the whole person not just in relationship with God, but in relation to her/himself, his fellow soldiers and the world with which he/she relates and will have to compete. The TEC weekend is Christocentric and so it is intended to be. The Christ of the Gospels is presented as real, alive and rational, not distant, aloof and unapproachable. The TEC weekend is not somber, intense or foreboding, and at the same time it is not shallow, saccharine or unapproachable. It is real, relevant, joyful and uplifting and places Christ at the center of one's universe around which the process of Christian living revolves.

## **The Saturday Experience**

There are many high points to the weekend experience, but perhaps one that leaves a great impression on the participants is the Saturday experience. While the participants are in the chapel, the Wheat Team is preparing an

agape meal and festive celebration. The candidates are led into a softly lit dining area with a special meal, candles, floral arrangements, table cloths and individual place settings. Soldiers are not used to such VIP treatment and always react with astonishment and awe. The agape meal is a prelude to the joy of the resurrection. While the candidates are eating, the Wheat Team is busy preparing a classroom for what is traditionally called the "Hoot." In what has been termed a "trust walk," each of the soldiers of their respective tables, are lined up and instructed to keep their eyes closed. They place their hands on the shoulders of the soldier in front of them and are then quietly led down a long corridor leading to the room where the parish is waiting.

The procession of 50-60 soldiers walking in guided silence, led by the lay director carrying the TEC banner is in itself a rather ennobling sight. As they begin to approach the classroom, the gentle singing of the parish can be heard. There is no doubt that there is a great deal of anticipatory anxiety going on in the minds of each soldier-candidate. Finally, all of the 60 soldiers are facing their unseen parish. The hymn is still being sung, and the room is dark except for the luminaries held by the parish. When the last of the hymn is completed, the lay director instructs the candidates to open their eyes and then says: "Troops of TEC No. 14, I present to you the parish of St. Michaels . . . St. Michaels, I present to you the soldiers of TEC No. 14." The community then mingles with the soldiers and an hour of group singing and group dancing follows in an absolute hour of joy. The Post Commander of Fort Gordon, who vigorously supports the TEC program, generally sends a delegate to represent the Command. During the hoot of TEC #14, the soldiers were delighted to find the Post Commander, General Childs and his wife, holding candles and greeting them with song and dance along with the rest of the parish.

At an appointed time, a previously selected candidate thanks the parish, in the name of all the candidates for coming to share their weekend with them. As a token of gratitude, the entire group of candidates sings the blessing song to the parish and the parish in turn sings the blessing song back to them. One cannot but help envision the Von Trapp family singing their farewell song to the party guests and gently tripping off to bed . . . However, the night is still young for the candidates . . . instead of going to bed they meet in the chapel, encircled around a ciborium of the Blessed Sacrament for 30 minutes of spontaneous and moving prayers and requests for "Mom and Dad," "my brother who died last week," "my grandfather who is undergoing surgery for cancer," etc. The prayers of these young soldiers are genuine and from the heart. In a darkened chapel, illuminated by only two vigil lights, the safety and anonymity of offering up prayers and requests affords a genuine opportunity for the power of group prayer.

After the very moving experience of "heart prayers," the candidates return to the group area where a vocation panel is presented. This consists of a sister, a priest, a deacon, a married couple and two single people, and occasionally a religious brother, who briefly present the dynamics of their vocation to the candidates. This is not a hard sell or vocation recruitment vehicle. It is simply a mechanism to present to young people the various vocational options that are theirs. After the presentation by each speaker, the



candidates are then given the chance to direct questions to each of the presenters. Oftentimes this is the first exposure young soldiers have had to sisters or brothers and especially deacons, and the questions presented are full of genuine interest and inquiry. Equally intriguing are the personal testimonies given by single people citing the joys as well as hardships of the single life. The vocation panel is always well received and provides a genuine vehicle to clarify the issue that Christ can be served in various callings. The vocation panel is carefully placed to precede the talk on Sunday morning, "Christian in the World."

In an ongoing mode of recognizing and working with adolescent psychology and restless energy, the team has acknowledged that there must be integrated into the weekend a reprieve and an opportunity to capitalize on that energy. Saturday evening has been set aside for a period of jubilation and celebration and the soldiers are given an opportunity to let off some creative steam. Each table is allowed a 20 minute period to come up with a skit that will be presented to the rest of the candidates and team. The skit is intended to be an expressive medium for communicating a particular lesson learned or a moving experience that demonstrates a meaningful event for them during the weekend. License is even given to allow them to poke gentle satirical fun at another table, the lay director or even the spiritual director. The skits have always been in good taste. For those who choose to satirize an event or a person, the end result has been unrestrained laughter and joy and always taken in good stride. Frequently the skits depict a spiritual message that has direct applicability to barracks life and soldiering and oftentimes are moving portrayals of the real world soldiers live and work in.

The evening does not end with frivolity, however. After the skits, the soldiers move into the chapel where an illuminated face of Christ is placed on the altar in a darkened chapel while three meditations on the "glances of Christ" are read by a team member. The soldiers are then encouraged to remain in the chapel for private prayer if they choose, or to seek spiritual counsel from the spiritual director or other team members before retiring for the night. TEC attempts to meet the needs of all the soldiers through counseling and guidance during the weekend.

While TEC is not designed as an ecumenical experience, sincere non-Catholic soldiers are welcomed and every effort is made to accommodate their needs and make them feel comfortable and welcomed as participants in a Christian experience.

And so the TEC weekend continues. TEC recognizes the energy of youth, the creativity of youth and the dynamic spirituality of youth and carefully address the whole youth rather than just a segment of his or her life. Eating, sharing, praying, self-disclosure, creativity and exercise are all carefully orchestrated to address the emergence of the complete Christian youth.

The TEC weekend ends with almost a universal regret wishing that it had continued longer. The regrets of leaving are real, for in many instances, young people found joy and love, cleansing and rebirth, friendship and



acceptance and an intimacy with Christ as well as an awakening of goals and purpose within the Christian context. TEC ends with a joyful celebration of Mass.

The moment of investiture has arrived. Each candidate comes up with his entire table kneeling on a *pre dieux*. In back of the candidates stands the lay director while the spiritual director and assistant lay director are on the opposite side of the candidates. The assistant lay director hands a cross with a two dimensional image of the crucified Christ affixed to a woven cord. The lay director explains to the candidates that they are to become the third dimension to complete the life of Christ in their lives. "Christ has no hands but our hands, no heart but our heart." As the spiritual director places the cross over the head of each candidate, he says: "Thomas, Christ is counting on you." The candidate then responds, "And I on Him." The lay director then moves to the next candidate and places his hands on their shoulder and so the investiture continues. As each candidate is invested, he moves to the receiving line where the entire TEC team and Wheat Team is lined up to give congratulatory hugs. Oftentimes the emotions that have been suppressed during the weekend, burst forth with unabashed weeping with joy and celebration.

The three main symbols of the TEC weekend, the Christ candle, the Bible, and the bell, are officially retired. The lay director remarks that "the light of Christ is now in our hearts and we can extinguish the candle, the Word of God is now in our hearts and we can symbolically close the Bible and proclaim the Word. The bell, representing the call of Christ has been answered and we can now officially silence the bell." The TEC banner is ceremoniously folded and the lay director announces: This officially closes TEC #14. The final hymn, The TEC Song, sung to the tune of How Great Thou Art, is sung and the candidates depart on the waiting bus amid emotional embraces and farewells.

In a few short pages, the concept of TEC has been presented. It highlights primarily the logistics and liturgy and content but does not address the hidden fruits of this incredible program, that has, to date, counted over 535 soldiers as participants.

TEC does not end like a balloon being lost in the atmosphere. Believing that it is not how high you fly but rather how straight you walk after you've come down, the team has TEC reunions every two weeks for a couple of months, gathering the candidates together for renewal, sharing and praying as well as celebration. As Jesus said, "I will not leave you orphans," neither does the TEC team leave the candidates as orphans—they are adopted, as spiritual trustees and are embraced during the entire period of their AIT.

TEC is truly a ministry of youth . . . a soldiers ministry, that does not just happen dependent upon fervor and dedication. To get TEC off the ground requires an incredible amount of selfless dedication, coordination, leadership and support. There are many meetings, many prayers, much time and much love. Those who love TEC enable TEC to happen!

## Chaplain is Spiritual Director

TEC, of course, has a spiritual director, a troop chaplain who is responsible for the spiritual content, direction and formation of the entire program. The right hand man/woman of the TEC program is the lay director who orchestrates and essentially directs the entire operation. The lay director appoints an assistant director who facilitates the smooth operation of the weekend.

Likened to little leprechauns, the Wheat Team is the backbone of the entire TEC weekend. "The whole is the sum of its parts," aptly fits the description of this team which consists of 10-15 volunteers who are affectionately known as "Wheaties." The "Wheaties" are the worker bees who allow the lay director and the spiritual director to attend to the content of the program. They cook, serve and clean and essentially remain out of sight, by TEC manual directives, until they are officially introduced. Their spiritual service mission is mandated by the parable of the grain of wheat. They are the grains of wheat which lie hidden and out of sight, buried and obscured. The shaft of wheat cannot be germinated unless the grain of wheat dies from which springs forth life. Other key members of the TEC weekend are the table leaders. There are two table leaders per table. They essentially interact intimately with their eight soldiers and get to know them well, facilitate their interaction, act as role models and direct the course of the weekend for them. They are essentially micro-managers who take charge of their soldiers for the weekend. Other key members are the music ministers, recruitment and publicity teams, library committees and a host of other volunteers.

The Troops Encounter Christ ministry at Fort Gordon, Georgia is a program that is dynamic and hand tailored to meet the needs of soldiers, specifically AIT soldiers. The TEC team has expended considerable effort to uniquely fashion this program to address the special needs of soldiers with understanding and empathy. The TEC team undergoes training and its own spiritual formation as well as introductory training in the psychology of adolescents and the spirituality of adolescents via training films produced by the National TEC Organization. Specific prayers have been written for the TEC program. Familiar military jargon has replaced jargon that does not have application to their needs. The terms barracks, unit, commanders and leader have been generously used where applicable. The stations of the cross have been rewritten and the words comrades, fellow soldiers, etc., have been used in place of civilian terms that may not apply to soldiers. A TEC hymn has been written to the music of How Great Thou Art, using terms such as banner, signal and soldier to uniquely personalize and make it "their hymn." A logo has been commissioned that has two BDU-clad arms embracing a cross indicating that a soldier can be equally loyal to both God and Country.

TEC is a ministry that works because it is truly an apostolic work whose mission is clearly and succinctly stated and exercised. The impact that TEC has had on each soldier in each unit has not been assessed. TEC is not in the business of doing follow-up surveys or studies. However, if the

love of Christ and the encounter with Christ that these soldiers have experienced is any measure of the success of a program, then we declare TEC to be an outstanding success!

## **Troops Still Encountering Christ**

According to recent interviews (November 1991), Troops Encounter Christ is alive and well at Chapel #9 in Fort Gordon, GA. Command Chaplain (COL) Sonny Davis is an enthusiastic supporter of the program. He declared, "It is the most dynamic, spiritual retreat for young soldiers I've ever seen." He indicated the spiritual growth for the lay team is unprecedented in view of the challenging spiritual leadership and servanthood experiences they encounter. Chaplain (CPT) Patrick Dolan, officer-in-charge of the program, reports that more than two-hundred AIT (advanced individual training) soldiers benefit from the experience each year. Father Dolan and the lay team of 50 or so community members present TEC four times each year, with 60 to 70 soldiers attending each time. Though this is a Catholic program which takes the participants through Catholic rituals to experience a personal relationship to Christ, it attracts many Protestant soldiers who benefit from it. In fact, due to the many Protestants who attend, the team has added a United Methodist minister to assist in the program. Father Dolan reports that some weekends have more Protestant soldiers than Catholic. The command views it as the best retreat program on post, and the commanding general has requested all trainees who desire to attend be released from weekend details to do so.



# Whose birthday is it, anyway?

We believe the important news at Christmas is not who comes down the chimney, but who came down from heaven. We invite you to come and join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.



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## Faith Sharing in the Military

**Robert G. Leroe**

A soldier sat in my office complaining that his company commander had forbidden him from telling others about his faith in Christ. I called the commander, who happened to attend my chapel, and discovered that this well-meaning soldier was using duty time to read his Bible and aggressively push his faith on others.

After the call, I returned my attention to the soldier. I encouraged him to continue sharing his faith, by being a top-notch troop while on duty, then to verbalize his beliefs on his off duty time. Both the verbal and non-verbal witness communicate Christ. We then discussed ways to witness.

### Button-holing

The picture that often comes to mind when we hear the word “witness” is a Bible-thumping, “holier-than-thou”, collar-grabbing fanatic shoving the Gospel down people’s throats. Some people must think they can argue or pressure others into the kingdom of God. They fail to see that their approach (not their message) is offensive and rude. This kind of “scalp-hunting” zeal is an unfortunate stereotype of faith-sharers, and is sometimes painfully accurate. Those who lack common sense in evangelism may actually lead people away from faith. While some well-meaning believers may have little sense of tact, and others are downright obnoxious, faith sharing is an integral part of many faith groups. The methodology is what often turns people off. No one likes to be intercepted by high pressure salespeople.

“Friend, are you saved?”

“‘Friend’? You don’t even know me!”

This exchange seems impersonal and unpleasant; yet the dedicated “soul-winner” has a burden to share a message that has changed his or her life, and feels compelled to reach others with this good news. Many

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Christians feel a sense of urgency to follow the Great Commission in Matthew 28, to “go and make disciples of all nations” (vs 19). They see the spiritual needs of others and understand their responsibility to “reach the lost.” A soldier said to me, “I cannot call myself a disciple of the Lord if I’m not actively telling others about Him.” The goal of these committed believers is to know Christ and make Him known. Like someone with a cure for cancer, they say that it would be morally wrong to keep the cure for themselves. “This is a day of good news, but we are keeping silent” (II Kings 7:9).

Many who attempt to witness actually feel tremendous fear—of personal rejection, ridicule, or worse—fear that the person they’re witnessing to may be turned off to Christianity. Soldiers may be afraid of being regarded as a “holy roller.” Many express concern that they lack the “right words” to say. Sometimes their understanding of Christian doctrine is weak. Others act as though the Gospel was classified material, and only Christians have proper clearance to know its message. Some fear that when people see their humanness, they will be labeled hypocrites. Eventually they feel guilt because they have failed to take more opportunities to share their faith, knowing that being a witness is part of living the Christian life. They may hide behind a canned approach (as though everyone had the same needs, questions and objections), or they may have enough boldness to be themselves. I overheard one soldier say to another, “I feel a bit afraid that you’ll think I’m a religious fanatic for saying this, but I think it’s really important. . . .”

The evangelical position is that God is working through His people. One description of evangelism is “one beggar telling another where he found bread.” The disciple’s part in evangelism is simply to communicate God’s truth and love by word and deed, realizing that whatever may be accomplished, God the Holy Spirit is working through them and will bless in spite of human weakness, failure, or inconsistency. This comforting thought, however, is no excuse for a lack of preparation or for a tactless approach.

Some Christians seem to feel that the success of evangelism depends entirely upon human effort. These are the super salespersons, who appear to be trying too hard to convince others to receive God’s salvation. They “preach” rather than discuss their faith. They are consumed with their burden for souls and with the awful thought that if they fail to act, someone may end up in hell for all eternity. They may also be convinced that if they do not take advantage of every witnessing opportunity, they may suffer divine judgment. Everything depends on them to keep people from eternal punishment.

Believers who recognize that God draws people to Himself are free to be themselves. They see themselves as seed sowers and waterers who trust God to provide the growth. He is responsible for the outcome. Their confidence is in God’s work; He does the saving. They recognize that while they may encourage others, only God can create spiritual interest. God is responsible for the outcome. If they do not see a conversion, they don’t assume they have failed. They recognize that God can use their few words



of witness, and that gradually the people they are sharing with may be ready for more. They are convinced that God's word is never wasted. They let God's power be the measure of their expectations. And they understand that people need time to consider their needs and the promises of Christ. A "snap" decision may not even be a genuine conversion.

## **"Lifestyle Evangelism"**

In contrast to the obnoxious, high pressure salesmanship of some "soul winners," is what several evangelical groups call "lifestyle evangelism." This is a comparatively soft-sell approach, in which believers live the good news and by developing social relationships with others they earn the right to discuss matters of eternal life. Through mutual interests ("common ground"), active listening and unconditional acceptance they prove that they care about others. Lifestyle evangelists conduct a ministry of involvement and reconciliation. This approach does not exclude spontaneous opportunities to say a few words about one's faith to acquaintances and even strangers. Some non-believers may refuse to hear a single word about spiritual things until they are sure that their doubts or rejection will not affect the friendship.

Lifestyle evangelism demonstrates how knowing Jesus Christ affects one's worldview and lifestyle. Through personal contact and example one is able to introduce others to Jesus Christ, and demonstrate the genuineness of their faith by how they respond to the stresses and temptations of life. Ghandi allegedly once said, "The reason I am not a Christian is because of Christians." Non-Christians will not likely be attracted to the Christian message unless they detect the dynamic reality of Christ's teaching in the lives of His followers. Genuine faith means that Christ is just as real in the motor pool 0930 Tuesday as He is on Sunday morning. God's love is seen through sincere friendliness, openness, interest and caring.

Some believers cloister themselves in their spiritual circles, never developing friendships with those who are "lost." They may be afraid of being tainted by lifestyle practices or ideas; in either case, their faith is likely insecure. Christ taught that His followers are "in" the world though not "of" it (John 17:14-16). Christians may isolate themselves from the world or seek to be a refining force in the world, but separation from worldly influences prevents them from having any significant spiritual impact. Paul Little writes that "withdrawal from those who do not know Jesus Christ is outright disobedience to the will of the Lord" (Little, p. 28).

Witnessing is not an option for many Christians. Methods may vary, but the mandate to share Christ does not. Evangelist D.L. Moody was criticised for his method of evangelizing. He inquired, "What is your method?" The critic admitted he had no method. Moody responded, "Well, I like my method of evangelism far better than your *no* method." Those who criticise an active sharing of the gospel yet remain silent are unqualified to critique.

## Free Exercise and Religious Accommodation

Worship, dietary and medical practices are protected by our first amendment and are spelled out in DA Pam 600-75. The Army has been very sensitive to the religious requirements of soldiers. "The Army places a high value on the rights of its members to observe tenets of their respective religions. It is the Army's policy to approve requests for accommodation of religious practices when they will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, healthy, safety, or discipline" (par 1-3, Policy). This brings us back to the company commander who wants his soldiers to perform their duties. When one's religious mission interferes with the mission of the unit, it is time to clarify what being a disciple means. A soldier who is neglecting his or her military duties must be encouraged to "render unto Caesar" in order to have a credible, effective witness for the Lord.

Most units have a barracks visitation policy which prevents soldiers from being prey to various sales and religious organizations. I was contacted by a representative civilian religious organization who complained that his group was being kept from conducting door-to-door barracks visitation. I explained the policy, and added, "How would you like all sorts of people knocking on *your* bedroom door?"

I was told in seminary that the military would not allow me to lead soldiers to a saving knowledge of Christ. Yet I have found that the chaplaincy has consistently expected that chaplains maintain their theological identity and integrity.

Witnessing is musically encouraged in military chapels. The *Book of Worship for U.S. Forces* includes 23 hymns dealing with Christian outreach, witness, and evangelism. These include: "Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak", "I Love to Tell the Story", "You Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim", "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations", and "Church, Rejoice! Raise Thy Voice".

Faith sharing does not require every counseling session to become a soul-winning session, but faith is an issue. Pastoral counseling sometimes begins by learning a person's religious background. Often those who come to see a chaplain have little spiritual background or interest. I occasionally say to counselees, "Let's talk for a moment about the possible spiritual dimension of your concern." If we believe that there is a word from the Lord for those who seek out our help, we are neglecting their needs if we keep silent. If we are convinced that our God has helped us and can help others, we are obliged to share our faith. If we do not somehow communicate the love and truth of God, we are doing social work and not ministry. This does not mean that in every counseling opportunity we go through the "Four Spiritual Laws" or the "Roman Road." It means we let God love others through us.

## An Effective Witness

I have seen some commendable examples of the faith sharing. One of my former commanders was very active in chapel programs and Bible studies. It

was the custom of the 3d Armored Division to give names to all vehicles (since the CG's vehicle was "HELL CAT," I named mine "HEAVEN CAT"). My commander's CUC-V bore the name "DEACON." At staff meetings he would encourage the staff to participate in chapel activities. He gave his testimony at a 3AD prayer breakfast. He acknowledged God's help at his change of command ceremony. A Bible was present on his desk. He read Scripture at memorial services. He served as an usher for Sunday services. And most of all, he cared about his troops. He let his life affirm his faith on a daily basis. He left a legacy of spiritual leadership which communicated an active, living faith in Christ.

Jesus declares in Acts 1:8, "You shall be My witnesses." Regardless of our views concerning faith sharing, we can help those who seek to witness for God to effectively communicate as good "ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His appeal through you" (II Corinthians 5:20).

### **Sharing The Good News**

"Happiness is giving all to Christ and Christ to all". Yet how can we talk to others about our faith? Here are some suggestions on how to introduce people to the Lord Jesus Christ:

1) Be yourself—whether you're outgoing or shy, humorous or serious, let people see the real you. Let your personality shine forth; God wants to use you as you are. Be real. Let people see how Christ operates in your life.

2) Take initiative—don't be so tactful you fail to make contact. Ask God for opportunities to witness and use them. God is looking for your availability. "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have . . . with gentleness and respect" (I Pet 3:15).

3) Tell people how you feel. If you're afraid someone will think you're a fanatic, say so. "You know, I feel afraid you'll think I'm a religious fanatic for saying this, but I think it's really important . . ." Let their need overcome your fear.

4) Ask people for their opinion, for example, "How do you think we can get God's forgiveness?" "Do you believe in heaven?" "How do people get to heaven?" "How do you view God?—what's He like?" "What do you think a real Christian is?" And listen. Many people feel they have to first deserve salvation; they fail to see it is a gift. You can't live Christianity till you're born into it (Gal 2:20).

5) Make friends with people. Establish relationships through mutual interest, by which you gain the right to witness. Find common ground. Get to know non-Christians, and let them see Christ in you. Acceptance means "You can be yourself with me." Meet people on their own ground. And remember—a



disciple is sharing Christ all the time, even when he or she doesn't realize it. But don't come on too strong—in other words, don't ram the truth down people's throats.

6) Learn people's interests, needs and opinions—listen to what they have to say. Don't argue or interrupt. Good communicators start out as effective listeners. Show people you care about them. You may likely be able to inject the spiritual dimension to their interests, whether they are sports, politics, music, etc. As you discuss world events, you might ask, "What do you think is wrong with the world?" (note: If you care about others you'll accept them regardless to their response to your witness.)

7) Learn their religious affiliation and level of spiritual interest and understanding. You might ask, "What's your church background?" Invite them to come to a Chapel service or activity. (note: avoid theological language; speak in terms people can understand—be simple and clear.)

8) Know the facts—be able to communicate the basics of Christianity, but avoid a "canned" approach. Know what you believe, why, and be able to find some references (It is often a good idea to have the persons you are talking to read the verses for themselves). The more verses you memorize, the sharper your sword will be. Your goal as a disciple is a working knowledge of God's word. You should know the fallen condition of mankind (in other words, be able to explain sin), Who Jesus is, what He accomplished on the cross, how and why we can be forgiven. Present the problem and the Solution.

9) Share your testimony—"Have I ever told you how I became interested in Christianity?" "Have I ever shared with you how I found meaning and purpose in life?" Tell what your life was like before you trusted Christ, how you became a Christian, and the difference Christ has made in your life. Quote a verse that helped you understand the Gospel. No one can refute a changed life. (But don't preach or lecture.) You can explain why you no longer fear death, why you've overcome loneliness, how you found true peace and purpose in life. There's something wrong when we can't talk about Someone we love.

10) Elicit a response—ask if they'd like to ask Christ to come into their lives; ask if they'd be willing to pray with you. Their decision is your objective. The Navigators' "Bridge to Life" tract offers this prayer: "Lord Jesus, please come into my life and be my Savior and Lord. Please forgive my sins and give me the gift of eternal life."

11) Be visible—find creative ways to show your faith; a poster on your wall, a Bible on your desk, saying grace silently in the mess hall; playing Christian music on your stereo, or wearing a Christian T-shirt.

12) Be patient—and if you don't see a conversion, don't assume you failed. You may have simply led them closer to Christ. Gradually they may be ready for more. People need time to consider their need and the Gospel. Jesus said "count the cost"—they may not be ready to turn their lives over to Him. A "snap decision may not be a genuine conversion. God's word is never wasted. Don't force a discussion, and know when to stop. Keep it

friendly. You may be able to extend and reinforce your witness with a Christian tract, book or Bible.

13) Be honest—if you're asked a question you don't know the answer to, say so. This may open the door for a future discussion, after you've researched a response. Keep in mind that some people like to argue, while others have honest, legitimate concerns and objections.

14) Be loving—Reflect God's love by showing unconditional acceptance.

15) Be confident—pray for the power of the Holy Spirit, then expect God to work—you're only planting seed. God's in charge—He provides the growth; He does the saving. We cannot open people's eyes or create spiritual interest; we're simply God's instruments. He will work through you in spite of your weaknesses, and your perceived "lack of the right words." Relax! Don't be discouraged. Let God be responsible for the outcome.

Let His power be the measure of your expectations

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*Some verses you can use:*

I Timothy 2:5-6

Isaiah 59:2, 64:5-7

Ezekiel 36:26-27

Romans 3:23, 6:23, 10:9

I Peter 3:18

John 1:12, 3:16, 10:27, 6:37

I John 1:9, 5:11-13

Ephesians 2:8-9

Psalms 51

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# With all due regard to TV Christianity, have you ever seen a Sony that gives Holy Communion?

If TV Christianity makes you want to switch channels, come and join us this Sunday in Christian fellowship and worship without commercial interruptions.





# Expanding the Boundaries of Single-Soldier Ministry

**Joseph A. Gibilisco**

Upon arrival at the U.S. Army Medical Center and School I was assigned the additional duty of coverage of an Advanced Individual Training battalion. There were times I wondered how my newly acquired skills in the area of Marriage and Family Therapy would ever apply to single soldiers. But I discovered the application was natural, and my training began to expand my thinking about what I knew previously as “single soldier” ministry. This article will capture some of my personal discoveries about the application of family systems theory to individual problems, family therapy techniques when working with soldiers, and the family of origin as a topic for single soldier retreats.

## Problem Identification

To begin with I conducted an in-house “straw” sampling of the types of counseling that were in progress during a 30-day period by all brigade chaplains. What I received did not surprise me—more than 80% of our counseling load had family related issues as an integral part of the presenting problem. Soldiers reporting “adjustment” problems were also having difficulty with the process of separating from families of origin, the most frequent complaint. I suggested that if we, as Unit Ministry Team members would focus on family issues, the “adjustment” issues would likewise become resolved. We began to include family awareness into our total ministry to soldiers in counseling, retreats, worship, and Bible studies to include family awareness. Training the entire Unit Ministry Team became

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the first task. This focused on awareness and identification of family stress as a function of soldier stress in training. We then identified contexts in which family issues become painfully poignant for soldiers in training.

**RELATIONSHIPS**—Invariably every young person is involved in at least one intense relationship with the desire, expressed or unexpressed, to be connected with someone else. Our families of origin have also had lasting influence upon our relational behaviors and social development. The connection between these two phenomenon is somewhat obscure to us and requires some intentional introspection.

It is here that a caring and understanding chaplain, or other counseling professional, may be able to help. There are a number of family of origin emotional structures that can cast some light upon our ministry in the counseling context; some of the more toxic ones are:

1. Abusive families—Family members become means to other family members' ends. Anyone surviving the effects of abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, etc.) remains locked in a cell of low self-esteem. There is also the tendency to confuse the abusive relationship of a family member with "the way things ought to be" in relationship with others.
2. Addictive families—We probably know more about the effects of addiction in families than we ever have. Whether it is chemical or experiential addictions, the one emerging from such a family can have severely impaired relational skills. We know that relational skills such as communicating and trusting are severely affected. Much of the therapeutic work must be done in counseling as well as within the context of a nurturing group.
3. Enmeshed families—This is a type of family in which personal boundaries are violated. Often, the system is closed to external systems such as school, church, or clubs. This type of family is the seedbed for sexual and other types of abuse. Family members never fully individuate from the dysfunctional web formed in the family. Relationships with others are viewed as competing with the family, and though a marriage may occur, the new marriage is always subordinate to the family of origin.
4. Highly triangulated families—Triangles suggest coalitions and power structures operating within a family. The clearest example of the relational stress in these families occurs almost naturally in step-families. Biological parents naturally feel closer to their own children than they do to step-children. This type of family (an ever-increasing family type in America today) must negotiate the slow process of creating a new family though adopting new roles. This does not always occur easily and many times people emerging from step-families are tentative about their relationships with others, fearing rejection and isolation.

Triangles can and do occur in unbroken nuclear families. When these power alliances occur, relationship patterns become unbalanced leaving

people feeling rejected and lonely. One example, is the father who subverts the authority of a mother by endearing himself to one or more of the children (this example is not gender specific). The motive for such a triangle may be a sense of powerlessness or conflict with the spouse. Nonetheless, the triangle forms unbalanced relationships throughout the family system.

These family “types” making lasting impressions upon the individual members in their journey to become differentiated from the family. Jacobson and Gurman said it well: “Individuals come out of their family of origin into a world of marriage ‘programmed’ to reenact roles and characteristics belonging to people, relationships, and events long buried.”<sup>1</sup>

## Family Therapy Techniques

One technique used to reduce the relational stress soldiers experience has been to encourage them to talk freely about their families. We begin the dialogue with, “Tell me what it was like in your family,” a “door-opener” to encourage talk about some of the pain that soldiers begin to confront (sometimes for the first time) as they start their military careers. I also use the above question to enable soldiers to probe back into their family systems from which they are differentiating. This sets the stage for a more thorough discussion of areas of pain, stress, or any other continued family struggle. Acting as if the soldier’s family was right there in my office helps each of us (both the soldier and me) to have access to the family system, family dynamics, and individual members.

Family of origin and systems theory are invaluable frames of reference when doing pre-marital counseling. I have found that pushing young, hopeful couples to know all they possibly can about their partner’s family of origin can be enlightening and enriches the burgeoning relationship. It also anchors the relationship to an informed commitment, rather than a whimsical wish for happiness.

**INTERGENERATIONAL STRESS**—Joining the military has been one of the traditional “first steps” that people make in their journey toward maturity and separation from family. After the initial adventure and glamour wears off, the positive and negative reminders of past family interactions remain. We carry these emotional interactions with us as we journey toward personal individuation, but for the one just beginning the journey, these interactions are recent and, if conflictual, may be unresolved. Conflict with a father or a mother may be transferred toward a drill sergeant or instructor. Episodes of inexplicable anger or depression may be a presenting problem, but family interactions may be the deeper issue.

I find it helpful to introduce to soldiers the proper use of a genogram. This can be an initial intervention to decrease anxiety. As soldiers begin to identify members of their family of origin and “step back” from the emotional attachment of their family systems, a richer sense of individuality

<sup>1</sup>. Jacobson, Neil & Gurman, Alan (eds.) *Clinical Handbook of Marital Therapy*, New York: Gilford Press, 1986: p. 110.



emerges. There is a discovery, as Carl Whitaker states, that personal growth is the delicate balance between individuating from and belonging to one's family of origin. One can identify the following through the use of the genogram:<sup>2</sup>

1. Anxiety in the family
2. Over- and under-functioning family members
3. Emotional cut-offs
4. Triangles
5. Toxic issues that seem to descend from one generation to the next (incest, affairs, alcoholism, etc.)

One is never completely through with the process of becoming totally differentiated from his/her family of origin, as Bowen states.<sup>3</sup> Chaplains and other counseling professionals may help the individual soldier *begin* the process with continued work being done throughout a lifetime. Therefore, regardless of how long or short a time we may have with soldiers in training, the process can nonetheless begin.

What I have offered thus far are applications of family systems theory within the counseling (individual) context. A broader context of application is in the form of Bible studies and weekend retreats.

Biblical insights are available to the Chaplain that give a spiritual dimension to what goes on in families. The biblical texts concerning marriage (Ephesians 5:31-33), the apparent intergenerational nature of sin (Exodus 20:4), relationships from a spiritual point of view, and the parable concerning the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11ff), are all excellent subject matter for Bible Studies.

## Single Soldier Retreats

The weekend retreat has been an excellent vehicle for assisting soldiers with their own family or origin work. This model began as an experiment to test its utilization and its validity. It is still being refined in terms of content. The weekend is structured with four one-hour sessions along with free time for reflection and recreation. The sessions are centered around the following topics:

Session one—Introductions and group formation.

Session two—General overview of intergenerational family dynamics (genograms, the flow of anxiety, toxic issues) and an introduction to the Biblical view concerning family issues.

Session three—Excerpts from "Bradshaw on the Family" Video and discussion.

Session Four—Discussions (continued) about video and an introduc-

<sup>2</sup>Whitaker, Carl A. & Bumberry, William M., *Dancing with the Family*, (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1988), p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>Kerr, Michael & Bowen, Murray, *Family Evaluation*, W. W. Norton & Company, 1988, p. 106.

tion to the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15). An Ecumenical worship service (Catholic & Protestant) concludes the retreat and focuses upon issues that have surfaced over the weekend. We encourage continued work on issues surrounding family of origin and relationships. Though written for women, I suggest reading *The Dance of Intimacy*, by Harriet Lerner. This popular book is theoretically based in Bowen's systems theory and assists the reader, male or female, in continued work with their family of origin. Thus far, every comment from feedback forms has reflected gratitude for such a retreat opportunity.

## CONCLUSION

Each member of the unit ministry team, worldwide and at every level, has a unique opportunity to do family ministry. This can be done if we expand "single-soldier" ministry to a ministry of helping soldiers cope with relationships, and intergenerational stress, and individuating from a family system that may have caused them pain or emotional injury. If unit ministry teams will understand that single soldiers bring the influence of their families with them for counseling, Bible studies retreats, or worship we can provide innovative family ministry to our total military population.

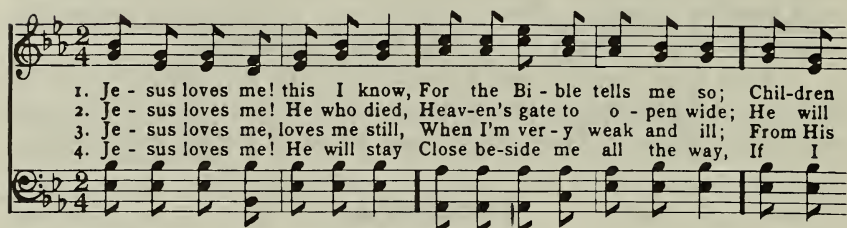
Even if we may have only a limited time with our soldiers in training units, we still have the opportunity to help them become functional through the insights offered by family theories and the power and the grace of God.

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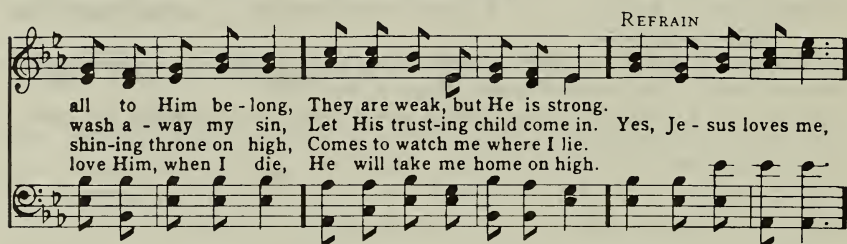
# Remember this tune from your childhood?

It's "Jesus loves me, this I know," and he still does, you know.  
Come, bring your family, and begin getting acquainted with Him again this Sunday.

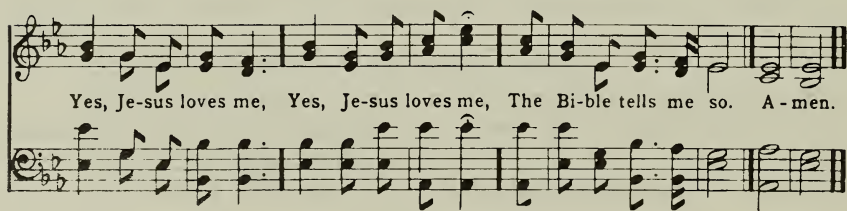


1. Je - sus loves me! this I know, For the Bi - ble tells me so; Chil-dren  
2. Je - sus loves me! He who died, Heav-en's gate to o - pen wide; He will  
3. Je - sus loves me, loves me still, When I'm ver - y weak and ill; From His  
4. Je - sus loves me! He will stay Close be-side me all the way, If I

REFRAIN



all to Him be - long, They are weak, but He is strong.  
wash a - way my sin, Let His trust-ing child come in. Yes, Je - sus loves me,  
shin-ing throne on high, Comes to watch me where I lie.  
love Him, when I die, He will take me home on high.



Yes, Je-sus loves me, Yes, Je-sus loves me, The Bi-ble tells me so. A - men.



## **The Strength of the Army Chapel**

**David M. Knight**

I am not a chaplain. I am a member of the Body of Christ, a believing, spiritual community.

We're facing some tough issues today: suicide, divorce, strife, abuse, and sexual harrassment, sometimes in our units, sometimes in our own families. It doesn't seem to be getting any better, for there are other personal and social issues such as AIDS, abortion, and world hunger, which cause many of us to cry out for help and meaning in a seemingly harsh and confused world.

Many of us are looking to the chaplains in the military who seem to be men and women of vision and have some real answers to these very real problems. A chaplain enters into places civilian ministers could never go. In the military, barriers to race, denomination, and social circles are not so finely drawn, so that many chaplains can build a more integrated, focused approach to spiritual community. This freedom has the potential to unleash God's power in some exciting ways in many military communities. How do I know this? I have seen it in action. I have seen for myself the strength of the Army Chapel.

### **Light in the Land of the Morning Calm (Ps 139:8-10)**

My experience is taken from a small military congregation in South Korea, Hannam Village Chapel. God poured out His Spirit in a powerful way on this small church of around one hundred, and they in turn had a dramatic effect on the whole community. These "Warriors of Light" came from all ranks and backgrounds and had no special propensity for spiritual work. Every major denomination participated, including some from the Roman

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Catholic faith (this was significant because of the distinct traditional separation from the Protestant faith group.) They came together in that time and place, along with a man God had called to be pastor. This community of people whom the Holy Spirit motivated did great things.

### **The S.O.P. (Standard Operating Procedure: John 15:5-8)**

What were some of the key characteristics that made this Chapel body so different, so effective? The first clue is found in the book of I Corinthians, chapter twelve. This passage describes the faith community as body, likened to our physical bodies, with each person fulfilling a specific function. Just as each body part cannot do the job of another, so each person is significant in the Body of Christ.

### **A Successful Spiritual Training Program (Hebrews 12:1-3)**

When the pastor first arrived, he assumed his correct role as spiritual leader. As he began to relate to and work with this fledgling group, he observed the gifts of some of the people in various areas of church service. (Recall that all the gifts God gave to his people were for the building up of the Body of Christ. See I Cor. 12.) Selectively, without the pressure of a check-the-block approach, the chaplain began to develop these gifts through individual and corporate study of the Bible. In turn, he employed them in key roles within the congregation. One by one, through prayer and application of God's Word to their lives, this group began to activate. It started with the teachers, as most revival does, who built a prayer and training base from which to send the main effort. The growth began with a Wednesday night Bible study. The pastor initiated this study to build a committed core of people from the congregation through the study of biblical principals for the Christian life. From this time of exposure to the Word and each other, seedlings started to sprout.

### **The First Fruits (Psalms 1:1-3)**

A team of people took over the youth group. They banded together, prayed frequently, and began to build a biblically-oriented youth fellowship. This team was determined to give the youth of the neighborhood an alternative to drug and alcohol use that was so prevalent in the housing area. These teachers also began to give the youth responsibility for their own spiritual growth by having the teenagers do their own teaching, praying and serving in the community. Other leaders came forward and taught classes on fruitful Christian living. A third group formed to study a New Testament book in depth. The key here was not so much the study of a specific passage but the way they used the Bible as the source document; how they prayed and sought the Lord fervently, and how accomplished laymen led the study. Teachers reorganized the Sunday school format to help youth of all ages apply the Word of God. The pastor oversaw the effort and gave guidance to the lay teachers.

## **Fruit That Will Last (John 15:16)**

What real life changes did all this teaching produce? The youth showed the first results. Initially, the number of youth in Bible study grew. Families whose kids had been distant and experimenting with all kinds of temptation were touched by the real excitement found in the life Jesus provides and were reunited with their families. The kids involved themselves in community and world affairs. They provided quarterly Sunday night services for the entire chapel and hosted some of the Friday night potlucks. So great was their new found zeal that in the summer of 1969 one youth worker and two teenagers from the youth group went to Guatemala as summer missionaries, sponsored by chapel offerings. Two of the three returned to Korea, leading what could be termed a youth revival; and the youth worker left the military to go into full time ministry.

## **Fruit In Its Season (Psalm 1:1-3)**

The next noticeable change was seen in the adults. Although giving is not necessarily a measure of maturity, it is a measure of commitment. The normal Sunday offering in the beginning was around \$200.00. As this body came alive, giving steadily increased to the extent that on one Sunday in order to send the three youth to Guatemala this same congregation gave in excess of \$5,000.00 at one service.

While the ministry was growing to over two hundred, the program grew to have a Sunday night service. This event provided the opportunity for laymen to share from the Scriptures about what God had done for them. This gathering soon grew into the nineties. The Wednesday study that had started with only a few core people was also over ninety in attendance. People met for prayer three days a week and established a prayer hot-line that anyone could call twenty-four hours a day for immediate intercession. Civic functions blossomed in Hannam Village where once there had been none. Community-enhancing events such as a skateboarding contest for teenagers created opportunities for the chapel to reach into the lives of their neighbors. They sponsored one particular Fall festival that ministered to over 2000 people. Members created a child outreach program to meet the needs of neighborhood youth whose parents both worked. In one situation when an apartment on the fifteenth floor of a highrise building burned, the Chapel congregation responded immediately with food, clothing, and a place to stay for dislocated occupants. They also provided immediate cleanup crews for the fifteen floors of water damage. Food was provided for the riot police guarding the village against Korean student attack. They also provided local orphanages and missions with personal and financial support. This is in no way intended to glorify the men and women who were involved there but is used merely as an example of what the Holy Spirit can do in a congregation that begins to seek God in a unified way.



## **The House On The Rock (Matthew 7:24-27)**

So what was the basis of the success this small Chapel experienced in this remote corner of the world? There were a few key principles from the Bible that they effectively employed which allowed God's Holy Spirit to work. First, the body was organized and unified on a solid basis of authority—the Word of God. II Tim 3:16-17 states that God Himself inspired all Scripture and that it has timeless ability to prepare God's people for every possible good work. The organized study of God's Word with a mind willing to apply what is said is the binding glue of any successful Christian group, especially the military chapel. The people of Hannam Village chapel studied God's Word, did what it said, and it worked.

## **Ask, Seek, Knock (Matthew 7:7-11)**

The second strategic operation this body accomplished was to pray a lot. James 5:16 reminds us that the fervent prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. One also recalls Jn. 15:7, "Stay joined to me and let my teachings become part of you. Then you can pray for whatever you want, and your prayer will be answered." (CEV) The people of Hannam Chapel were not satisfied with a quickly memorized liturgy in church and a few recited prayers before bed. They took instruction from multiple places in Scripture such as I Thes. 5:17 and Phil. 4:6,7 that tells God's people if they pray continuously that God will surely answer, and He did.

## **Teamwork (Hebrews 10:24,25)**

The third principle of success that this church employed and about which this article is primarily written is that of unity. The treatise of I Cor. 12:1-31 demonstrates clearly that the Church must work together if it is to be effective. No Army commander would be caught dead endorsing independent, unintegrated warfare in this age of the AirLand Battle; it is dangerous and ineffective. In the same way no success can be found as a lone ranger Christian. It does not matter how godly any one individual is, he cannot by himself even begin to accomplish what Jesus promised that the Church would do. The sooner the Church breaks down denominational, social, racial and other barriers and begins using the strong points of each particular tradition the sooner it will take its rightful place in history as an effective and powerful force for good in the world.

## **The Winning Edge (Matthew 6:33)**

In this regard, the military chapel has a distinct edge over the vast majority of its civilian counterparts. The small post chapel has an immense opportunity to achieve awesome results by capitalizing on this strategic unity. As a body of believers, Hannam Chapel worked so well because it put selfish, divisive striving away and under the direction of a godly pastor, pulled

together to put God's kingdom first and made it available to others through loving, evangelistic, service.

### **Omega (Revelation 1:8)**

The key to the kingdom of God is not Congress, nor is it the demise of communism, nor even the strategic defense initiative; but it is the power and grace of Almighty God lived out in the military community chapel. It is His strength alone that supports our efforts. The military chaplain can accomplish great feats in his own backyard through his dedication to God and by joining the Holy Spirit in unifying the Body of Christ, the Army Chapel, in our military communities.





## **Shared Resources—A Success Story**

**Margaret M. Scheck**

### **Change Is Reality**

Authors who write about such things foretell many changes in our world by the year 2000 AD. Some predict that cancer, diabetes, and some forms of heart disease will become cured through gene splicing technology. Farmers won't have to worry about spraying their crops because they will be planting insect resistant seed. We may even by that time see our first woman President of the United States.

Whether or not these predictions tell us the truth about our future one fact is for certain: change is unavoidable.

Only a few years ago when I began to work as a Religious Education Coordinator at Peterson Air Force Base, a turtle was simply a reptile with a hard shell, not a super-hero from the sewer. Germany was a nation divided with unrealistic hopes of unification. Iraq was a country that was at war with Iran, and we were at a very safe distance from the conflict.

Change is everywhere and requires a great deal of personal effort just to keep up. The military chaplaincy has not avoided this dimension of modern life. The denominational mix in all services brings on new emphases and changes. Non-Judeo/Christian faith groups will one day be a part of the military chaplaincy. The decreasing number of Roman Catholic priests mandates new realities. Of special interest to this article is the impact of decreasing funds for chaplain programs.

### **What's To Be Done About Funding?**

What about this new reality of decreasing funding? Can the Chaplaincy provide the same quality program to service members and their families with

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significant funding cuts? Some have answered this question with an emphatic "No!" They argue programs must be curtailed to meet the level of falling funds. While it is certainly true that we must make changes to meet these new realities, creative alternatives are available for those willing to seek them out. My story is a success story of this kind of creative programming.

## **Stewardship Is Reality**

This article focuses on the notion that it is the responsibility of all in government service to seek ways of using resources to their fullest potential. We must stop asking questions about budgets and start looking in another arena for the answer. It's time to emphasize good stewardship as we approach the resources available to us.

With a commitment to the possibilities of sharing resources, and a vision of recruiting each other's skills, God's kingdom can be furthered. Installations can choose to enter into joint ventures as a way to engage in creative stewardship of resources.

## **Shared Resources Make Sense**

Peterson Air Force Base is located on the eastern edge of Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is sandwiched by Fort Carson, home of the Fourth Infantry Division (Mechanized), on the south, and the United States Air Force Academy with its unique mission as a Service Academy, to the north.

When in 1987 I accepted the responsibilities of Christian Educational growth for the Peterson Air Force Base Chapel Community I felt I had a real advantage. For over a decade I had been a volunteer for the Fort Carson Religious Education program. I also had worked with many of the 30 chaplains assigned to Fort Carson, and I knew the Director of Religious Education extremely well; he is my husband, Dennis.

I recognized early on the fact that there were some areas where a Base and Post could easily share resources. Dennis and I soon were sharing video and library resources. More importantly a free exchange of ideas enriched both programs. This marriage of resources (legally conducted with all the proper hand receipts) benefited both installations.

The challenge was to expand this successful relationship and involve the United States Air Force Academy's Religious Education program in a coalition where all members could influence and support each other. From the very beginning I recognized the importance of all Protestant and Catholic Religious Education Directors and Coordinators being involved in this process if it was going to be a success.

## **A Relationship Forged / A Vision Materializes**

In January of 1988 I invited all the Directors of Religious Education and the Religious Education Coordinators from the Air Force Academy and Fort Carson to join my colleague Brenda Wile, Catholic Religious Education

Coordinator, and me for lunch at the Peterson AFB Chapel. At this initial get-acquainted meal all three installations were represented.

With no organized agenda or planned goal except to get acquainted, we acknowledged that together we could make a difference for the better in serving our chapel communities. Our first revelation was that many of our group had never seen the installations and facilities of the others. So we set about visiting each other's installations. Through this process we developed a friendship and working relationship.

After a series of shared times and useful growth experiences the group felt comfortable to dream of a joint venture. Our thoughts converged into an idea of hosting an educational conference and inviting the volunteer Religious Education workers from all three installations, both Protestant and Catholic. Costs would be equally shared making each installation's financial commitment quite small. After a great deal of fun playing with possible themes Chaplain, Major, Bob Bruno, USAF, a chaplain assigned to the United States Air Force Academy Chapel, articulated the theme, "Mountain Top Spirituality for Teaching in the Pits."

On 6 January 1989 the first ever Front Range Military Christian Education Conference became a reality at the Base Chapel, United States Air Force Academy. The program surpassed most of our shared expectations. Despite an inclement Epiphany weekend, participants made their way up the slippery Academy roads to the Base Chapel. The conference drew 75 participants.

The conference was in session from Friday evening through Saturday afternoon. Each participant received a conference packet. Color coded name tags identified individuals by installation. The conference opened with a time of fellowship and a cake reception. The program was designed to provide the participants with four compelling workshops. The first session held after the welcome that snowy evening focused on our personal spiritual journey.

On a sunny Saturday morning at the foot of a snow-capped mountain range the second day of the conference was convened with donuts and coffee, and three intriguing speakers. Chaplain (MAJ) Jim Herndon, of the US Army Chaplaincy Service Support Agency flew in from Washington, D.C. to explain some of his research on the shape of ministry thirty years in the future. Other speakers focused on spirituality as an active part of one's lifestyle, and took a new look at teaching techniques to enhance affective learning. A good deal of the success of this conference was due to the selection of very effective speakers.

Worship was an integral part of our conference experience. On Friday evening, Saturday morning, and again on Saturday afternoon we gathered to praise the God whom we all served. Each worship time was different and unique to the chaplain leading the experience, yet each truly brought us together as fellow workers in the service of God.

The experiences of our coalition were very well received. So, not surprisingly, the 2nd annual Front Range Military Christian Education Conference was planned. To escape the icy road conditions which hindered our volunteers in January, the date of the event was moved to April 1990.



Dolores Curran graciously agreed to be our main speaker. The design of the conference was similar to the first. Fort Carson was the host and provided volunteers from the MCCW, PWOC, CCD, and Sunday School staffs as greeters, servers, hostesses and hosts. These volunteers were a substantial benefit to the overall delightful feel of the conference. Mini-workshops on Saturday were offered after Dolores Curran fueled her audience with a heightened commitment to nurturing family life. The conference proved to be a huge success.

After evaluating our work together, and the input of attendees at the conferences, the group decided to try a Fall kick off conference on 20 October 1990 at Peterson Air Force Base. Fr. Francis Quinlivan, Director of the Holy Cross Novitiate, Cascade, Colorado, led us to a new understanding of "Spirituality in a World of Change." A fall snow storm caused some last minute adjusting of the schedule, but our string of successes continued as participants were tremendously positive in their evaluations.

In the Summer of 1991, planning for the Fourth Annual Front Range Religious Education Conference began. The Fort Carson Directors of Religious Education and the Peterson AFB Religious Education Coordinator, Andrea Simpleman, and myself, prepared for another joint effort.

Fort Carson was the site for the event; the speaker was an energetic and skillful communicator, Rev. David Pendleton, an Air Force Reserve Chaplain. The Air Force provided the speaker and the Army, the conference center, nursery, and lunch. Neither installation could, on its own, provide this kind of training event. When funding requirements are cut in half, many more things became possible.

Once again it snowed early, this time the earliest on record. Fortunately the heaviest snow was Thursday, with only light flurries on Friday. However, our speaker had to drive in a snow storm from Kansas for 13 hours to reach us.

Saturday dawned like only a winter, mountain day can, with a crystal blue sky, blinding sun reflecting off snow-covered earth, and cold, dry air bringing awakening and refreshment.

Would the people come? They did. More than 50 religious education volunteers and chaplains came to hear Rev. Pendleton. He challenged us to live out our ministry as children of the Heavenly Father.

His words pointed us to the reality that we, in spite of all our sins and faults, might be the only Jesus some people see.

These conferences have illuminated a dimension we have gradually come to see: we are an example of joint cooperation. We have enjoyed the hard work, but the real meaning was getting Air Force and Army personnel together on each other's installation to talk about common ministry. It was no easy task, but it was worth the effort.

The drawdown is now upon us. We can choose to use our scarcer resources for ourselves, and curtail programs which we cannot afford on our own. Or we can come together and share resources. And when we do this, walls of indifference and ignorance break down, and we share the best in all of us.

## **Anyone Can Do It**

The proximity of Bases and Posts holds potential for many kinds of joint military relationships. Close ties will develop between people brought together to work on joint ventures. Trust will become the coin of the realm, and make it easier to be good stewards of the shrinking dollars.

Ours is a success story of what can happen when neighboring installations work together for the benefit of all involved. Petty rivalries between installations and services must give way to a commitment that takes seriously our shared ministry to Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and their families.







## **PWOC-USA: More Than We Dare Ask**

**Ann Besson**

To open the umbrella of unity over the United States is a dare whose time has come for the Protestant Women of the Chapel.

Stateside chapters of the PWOC want to worship, to pray, to network together. And it's going to happen in 1992. Finally.

### **The 1st International Reunion/35th Anniversary**

With a boldness lifted from the prayers and voices that ended in a single note of unity, PWOC members and friends said "Yes!" to organizing nationally, while attending the 1st International Reunion/35th Anniversary gathering held Nov. 15-18, 1990, in St. Louis, MO. The event marked the first time that active PWOC participants and former members had come together as a body of believers on a national scale in the United States. As stated in the reunion/anniversary brochure, "Throughout the past 34 years our conferences and retreats have been held in Europe. Today, with the changing times and pending troop withdrawals our PWOC chapters are being affected more than ever. Our goal for this reunion is to reunite our sisters and chaplain advisors who have paved the way for this dynamic ministry within the military chapel system. This is the first time we will meet internationally to uplift our military and their families in prayer."

The reunion was coordinated by Gale Wright, the 1988-89 PWOC European Council President; it attracted 95 people from all walks of current and past PWOC involvement. Army, Navy, Air Force, & Marine Corps were represented. People signed in from Panama, California, Alaska, Massachusetts, Georgia and states in between. One attendant, former Army Chaplain

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Ann Besson is the Publicity Coordinator of the PWOC-USA Steering Committee, and is Publicity Chairperson of the Ft. Belvoir, VA., chapter of PWOC. She is the wife of an Air Force officer stationed at the Pentagon.

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John Rhea, had helped to mold the first PWOC in Germany in the mid 1950s. Nine former European Council presidents, who served terms from 1967 to 1989, were present.

Prayer, worship, fellowship and Bible study were centered around the theme, "Christ is Our Hope," from Hebrews 6:19, and the hymn was "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less." Rev. Maria-Alma Rainey Copeland, the assistant to the Bishop of the North Carolina Synod for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, was the keynote speaker. She is also a former PWOC participant who was active as a lay chaplain while her husband was on active duty in Germany.

In the course of the three-and-a-half-day reunion, pressure mounted to meet the growing grassroots desire for a national PWOC network to be expressed in an annual training conference agenda. A committee took shape to harness the collective interests of the assembly and to come up with a working plan. Selected to participate in the committee were active duty and retired chaplains; former European Council presidents; and two members-at-large.

The following agenda evolved from the committee's presentation to and response from the St. Louis gathering:

- The stateside PWOC network is to be called, "PWOC-USA."
- Each Monday is a PWOC day of prayer.
- The training conference is to be scheduled at least by the fall of 1992.
- Gretchen Brown, the 1979-80 European Council President, was asked to head a steering committee to chart the course for the first training conference. Other committee members asked to serve were Sandy Burley (EC President 1986-87) as Finance Secretary, Altha Johnson as Conference Logistics and Transportation Coordinator, and Ann Besson as Publicity Coordinator. Also, two members of the assembly were asked to represent PWOC-USA interests before the Armed Forces Chiefs of Chaplains in Washington, DC. Mary Alice Heffner (EC President 1974-75) and Mrs. Besson, who live in the area, were asked to share the vision and to request support and seed money. The steering committee was installed in a ceremony during a Communion service officiated by a chaplain from each service: Capt. Herbert Goetz, U.S. Marine Corps; Lt. Deborah K. Banks, U.S. Navy; Maj. James Synder, U.S. Army; and Lt.Col. Larry Mosley, U.S. Air Force.

## **The History of PWOC in Europe**

To understand the momentum generated by the St. Louis gathering is to understand the history of the PWOC in Europe. The annual training conference held in Germany for PWOC officers, committee chairmen, and chaplain advisors has produced leaders and believers for more than 35 years.

Every year more are trained in a fairly straightforward, five-day conference that draws women and their chaplain advisors from across Western Europe. They are united by the PWOC motto, "We Are Workers Together for Christ." The aims of the PWOC are the aims taken back to each chapter at each military installation in each country. The aims are:

To LEAD Women

to accept Christ as a personal Savior and Lord.

To TEACH Women

the history, beliefs, and programs of the church, all built on a solid foundation of worship and Bible study.

To DEVELOP in Women

the skills of prayer, evangelism, stewardship, and social service, against a background of personal spiritual development.

To INVOLVE Women

in the work of the Chapel, in keeping with their abilities and interests.

According to *Heart & Hand*, the guidebook of the PWOC organization, "the PWOC is intended to be a cooperative effort among the officers, committee chairmen, chaplain advisors, and chapel staff to accomplish the PWOC aims. The chaplain advisor plays an integral part in facilitating an effective program."

Working within and encouraged by the U.S. military chapel system in Europe for more than three decades, the PWOC as an organization has survived and thrived. It has created a continuity, a ministry and a sense of mission that only loses its role as a unified organization when its participants cross the Atlantic Ocean.

How did it start in Europe? Again, according to PWOC history records and the *Heart & Hand*—

"Soon after large numbers of family members of the Armed Forces arrived overseas, women's groups formed in the chapels of many U.S. installations. They were organized to assist chaplains in fostering Christian programs, fellowship and spiritual growth among the members. Initially, these groups were only organized on the local level with no affiliation with other chapels or women's groups.

The United States Army-Europe Chaplain sent out a letter in September, 1955, urging the organization of a Protestant Women of the Chapel chapter in every chapel where family members attended. To facilitate the organization of the chapters, the USAREUR Chaplain set up a conference at the Retreat House in Berchtesgaden, Germany, on Oct. 3-7, 1955. Approximately 250 women from all over Europe attended. A USAREUR Council was established along with Area Councils by the women to give official guidance to the local chapters.

In May 1956, the first training conference sponsored by the USAREUR Council was held in Berchtesgaden. Five hundred spaces were reserved, and women arrived from all of Western Europe and from as far as Morocco. Workshops and speakers offered delegates



spiritual enrichment and effective leadership training in an environment of Christian fellowship. Since the results were so successful, training conferences have been held every May. Many women who have had the opportunity to attend these conferences consider the experience a highlight of their overseas tour.

## **The PWOC-USA First Training Conference**

The first PWOC-USA Training Conference will be held May 7-9, 1992, in Oklahoma City, OK, at the Embassy Suites Hotel. The theme is "More Than We Dare to Ask." Coordinating the conference details is Mona Baily, the 1977-78 and 1983-84 EC president.

Conference speakers will be the beloved, dynamic and Spirit-filled "Hansi and Betty," of HANSI Ministries, Inc., an interdenominational Christian organization that reminds Americans of their heritage and the meaning of freedom in a nation under God. Maria Anne Hirschmann (Hansi) and Betty Pershing are familiar speakers to many who have attended PWOC Training Conferences in Europe. Their individual testimonies are stirring and inspirational.

This conference is geared to potential leaders with opportunities for spiritual growth. Classes offered are designed to train attendees in the workings of the key committees and dynamics that shape a PWOC local chapter. Classes include Funds, Outreach, Programs, Publicity, Leadership, Hospitality, Time Management, Worship Through Music, and How to Lead a Bible Study.

The conference also affords attendees the opportunity to network with other chapter representatives from across the United States. During one evening, the assembly will be divided in groups according to geographic location so people will have a chance to meet their "neighbors." But whether one is a neighbor or not, the opportunity to find out what works, what challenges and what priorities a particular chapter offers its military chapel community, is an opportunity for growth and enrichment.

Registration packets will be mailed to chapels in early 1992. The cost of the rooms at the Embassy Suites Hotel for the conference will be \$70.00. Registration fee will be \$35.00 per person to defray the costs of the Saturday evening banquet, coffee breaks, and other administrative costs. All the details will be made available in January 1992.

Registration packets will be mailed to chapels in early 1992. The cost of the rooms at the Embassy Suites for the conference will be \$70.00. Registration fee will be \$35.00 per person to defray the costs of the Saturday evening banquet, coffee breaks, and other administrative costs. All the details will be made available in January 1992.

For any questions about the 1992 PWOC Training Conference, please contact Gretchen Brown at 204 Ashford Court, Nobelsville, IN 46060 or (317) 226-5655 during the day and (317) 877-1450 during the evening.



## The PWOC Leaders of Tomorrow

There is a simple creed that appears on page 11 of the *Heart & Hand*, which tells what PWOC leaders can expect today and tomorrow:

Chosen—

Not for glory,  
but for labor.

Set apart—

Not for honor,  
but for toil.

Two precious gifts are hers:

The grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ  
And—

A specific task in the church,  
His body, on earth,  
Today.

# Every Sunday, millions of Americans confuse greener lawns with greener pastures.

This Sunday, come and join us in the love, fellowship and worship of Jesus Christ. You may be surprised to find the grass is actually greener on our side of the fence.



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## Jesus Christ With Skin On

**James M. Meredith**

*Editor's Note: This article is provided to illustrate effective techniques for youth ministry. Contracting with outside groups is not essential for successful ministry. UMTs, supported by lay volunteers, are encouraged to employ or modify these techniques to meet the needs of local youth.*

When one is involved in youth ministries, it is amazing what catches the eye. Recently the "Church Around the World" reported: "Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teens. Each year 7,000 kill themselves and 400,000 attempt suicide. Fifty percent experiment with drugs. Seventy percent of today's students will be sexually active by the time they graduate from high school. Forty percent of all 14-year old girls will be pregnant by the time they leave their teens. One half of these will have abortions."

Columnist William Raspberry, commenting on a National Academy of Science report analyzing teen pregnancy said, "The suggestion is that teenage sex and its staggering consequences have less to do with contraceptive mechanics than with values; that the fundamental question facing adolescents is not 'How do I avoid pregnancy?' but 'Who and what am I?'" Raspberry goes on to conclude, "... our major task is to see to it that our children have, and know that they have, an opportunity for a decent, fulfilling life."

But to whom does the junior and senior high school crowd turn for answers? My local paper recently reported: "A high school counselor hears more and more teenagers say they don't know any reliable adult, even in church, to turn to for honest information about sex, drugs, music or just basic values." Often teachers are reluctant to stress a foundation for values for fear of passing on their own beliefs and prejudices to their students.

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Colonel Jim Meredith (USA, Ret.) is Executive Director of Military Community Youth Ministries. He served as a department head at the US Army War College in his last Army assignment, and since retirement has been President of the American National Metric Council. He holds degrees from Wheaton College and the University of Cincinnati.

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Recently a US Senate panel issued a report—"Code Blue"—which revealed similar findings:

- Suicide is now the second leading cause of death among adolescents, increasing 300 percent since 1950.
- Teen pregnancy has risen 621 percent since 1940. More than a million teen-age girls get pregnant each year. Eighty-five percent of teen-age boys who impregnated teen-age girls eventually abandon them.
- The teen homicide rate has increased 232 percent since 1950. Homicide is now the leading cause of death among 15 to 19-year-old minority youth.
- One in four young black males in America is either in prison or under court supervision.
- Every year substance abuse claims younger victims with harder drugs. A third of high school seniors get drunk once a week. The average for first-time drug use is now 13 years old.

Senator Dan Coats, a member of the panel, commented: "Like a lot of well-intentioned panels, Code Blue had no idea what to do with its findings. They diagnosed a cultural crisis. The solutions they eventually offered mainly centered on better health care." Former Education Secretary William Bennett commented on the same findings: "... Code Blue identifies a crisis of the spirit, a sickness of the soul, and it recommends aspirin, Band-Aids and a hall pass to the nurse."

The journey from adolescence to adulthood has never been easy. In every generation and in every place, teenagers have struggled to come to grips with their place in the world. They want to taste real life. They want to know if there is meaning in life, and if their individual lives are important.

Among these seekers are approximately 30,000 military teen-agers scattered overseas throughout 13 countries. Their problems and struggles are similar to those of the typical civilian teenager in the States, but are intensified because of their situation. They are frequently uprooted from the familiar and set down in the middle of a country whose language, culture and customs they don't understand. Sometimes they are separated from their families in order to attend school. They have no permanent home, no permanent school or church, no permanent friends. Kids don't say "goodbye"—just "see ya," hopefully, sometime, somewhere.

Obviously, there is a great need to reach out to these young people, and to build meaningful, relationships with them. If relationships are not built, the generation gap can never be bridged. If God is God and "loves the little children," somebody must communicate God's love to them in understandable terms. This is why some military chaplains and military parents formed Military Community Youth Ministries (MCYM) some eleven years ago.

There *are* answers for our military kids. The answers are in youth leaders and teachers who provide role models for high school gals and guys, who take the time to listen, who win the right to be heard, who walk the



extra, lonely mile at the end of a long day, and who say in a myriad of ways, "I care." Kids learn quickly to care less about what we know, unless they know that we care.

Often I am asked—where does MCYM fit? How do you get involved?

MCYM is a non-profit cooperative venture combining the vision and skills of two American-based Christian youth outreach agencies—Youth for Christ (YFC) and Young Life (YL). At the request of a military community, MCYM places and supervises staff from these two organizations who are trained in relation-centered outreach styles of youth work.

MCYM seeks to be the bridge between the best of the non-denominational youth ministries and the military teen culture—introducing professional youth workers to the needs of the military, and, as military people ourselves, telling chaplains, commanders and parents the "help" available to us out in the civilian sector. We are honored to be invited into the military community, to walk with and complement chaplains' efforts, to cooperate with school officials, and be a link in the chain of concern for our teens.

During Desert Storm, many of our MCYM staff assisted chaplains, filling the gaps in military communities and chapels as a result of the deployment of troops to the Middle East.

Every effort to reclaim our youth has a certain style, an organizational personality which grows out of an initial vision of what the organization has found to be successful over time. MCYM is no different.

We desire to be marked by the initiative of God in Jesus Christ who came with skin on. The Incarnation calls us to be the presence of Jesus Christ primarily to the military teen society—a presence marked by service, sensitivity and yes, some suffering, identifying with "our kids"—who know little and often care less about religious faith.

MCYM is friendship evangelism. In real terms, it is going out and climbing over the schoolyard fence into the teen world or walking through the front door into the family life of kids. We establish a friendly relationship with kids Jesus wants us to meet when he said, "As the Father sent me, so send I you." We stand in His stead. A leader was asked, "How long does it take to get a kids interested in Jesus?" His reply: "About as long as it takes for kids to get interested in me." So leaders spend precious adult time in a teen's world where spending time is descriptive of love.

MCYM staff are the bridge between adult and youth cultures, often feeling uncomfortable in "their" world, yet discovering the rewards of inviting one's self in as Jesus did with Zaccheus. Seeking to be role models, leaders offer the hospitality of their own lives and seek homes as places to meet. Usually called "Club Beyond," weekly meetings are a refuge for military kids *beyond* the alienation and loneliness of a broken and crumbling world . . . and Club is a place of fun and laughter . . . where Jesus is proclaimed.

The primary mission of MCYM is simply to bring Jesus to such kids. We believe Christ has commissioned us to bring the church or chapel to where these kids are. We *go* to kids—it would be foolhardy to expect them to *come* to us. MCYM did a study some years ago in Europe—94% of our military teens (yes-you read right) are not exposed to any spiritual input

during a given week. MCYM exists for that 94%. MCYM operates like a bee-hive in reverse—there has to be a lot of going out because there is very little coming in.

An intelligent, informed look at Christ can lead to a new decision or a renewed, conscious commitment to follow Him. (One must remember the basic problem—Jesus Christ as a person, his life and teachings, is simply viewed as irrelevant by most kids today, regardless of their early baptism or spiritual heritage.) Such a decision made without coercion can have a beneficial, life-changing effect on a military kid (or anyone for that matter), often touching and changing the military family in the process. We then build upon that desire, nurturing and encouraging this new kid in Christ to walk with Jesus, and in the process, to become a part of a local chapel or church.

How does this methodology work out in practice? One of our MCYM staff in Germany recently wrote me: “This fluid setting in which we minister is ripe for making the most of time. I pray as I know you do that by loving young people with God’s love and painting a picture of who He is with our lives and with our words—makes a difference. A significant moment for me occurred this summer as I had a last lunch with one of the high school girls about to leave for college. Having resisted church and her parents wishes that she get involved in Club Beyond, J. refused to come until her senior year. Finally, on her own, she came—and came back again and again. Sometimes we would talk after Club about the message or discussion and she always asked thoughtful questions and was honest about where she was in her thinking: not certain about God at all. As we sat in Burger King that day she said that at Club when (after all the fun and games) we open the Bible and look at who Jesus is and what He did and said about life—that it caused her to really think and consider Him. She shared that gradually, over time, she had come to faith in him that she knows will sustain her through the ever-present changes in her life.”

Throughout the year, our staff often have the privilege of hearing words like these that let us know it’s all worth it. Often, we don’t know the results. But every military kid deserves to know Jesus Christ, to see him in the twentieth century with skin on.



# Join us for Easter dinner.

Celebrate Easter with us. There's no better time to experience the joy of communion with Jesus Christ. And, of course, no reservations are necessary.





## A History of Malachi Ministries

**Dave Patty**

*Editor's Note: This article is provided to illustrate effective techniques for youth ministry. Contracting with outside groups is not essential for successful ministry. UMTs, supported by lay volunteers, are encouraged to employ or modify these techniques to meet the needs of local youth.*

The floor was gritty with dirt from hundreds of Jr. High shoes, but the six boys seated in a circle around me didn't seem to notice. They were more interested in the topic at hand, and as they scooted closer on the hard wooden surface, questions tumbled out one after another. "How do you know there is a God?" asked one earnestly. "Is there really a place called heaven?," interjected another. "How can you be sure you are going there?"

This was probably not a normal topic of conversation for Jr. Highers at the Hanau DYA that summer in 1982. But it hadn't been a normal evening either. For some time the chaplain at Pioneer Kaserne had been burdened with the daily sight of teenagers wandering the streets of the housing area. Knowing that most of them would never darken the door of a normal chapel service, he had teamed up with the religious education coordinator to put together an outreach that would speak to them. I was part of a youth specialty team called "Malachi" that had been invited in to do the program for that event.

The meeting had been well publicized and there was already a small crowd milling around the door when we arrived to set up our sound equipment. "Do you do any AC/DC?" one boy asked as I plugged in some cords. "How about Van Halen?" Our music was very contemporary in style but I knew he wouldn't recognize any of the titles. I tried a different tack. "We sings songs about a man named Jesus Christ." I could tell he was puzzled. "Why don't you stick around and listen for yourself—I think you'll

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Reverend Dave Patty is the director of Malachi Ministries, and is currently on sabbatical, working on a Master's degree in Educational Ministries at Wheaton College. He received a bachelor's degree from Multnomah School of the Bible, and is ordained by the Evangelical Free Church.

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really like it.” He nodded his head in agreement. I moved on, quite pleased with my P.R. ability—until I realized how little there was for a Jr. Higher to do on a Thursday night in the middle of summer.

The place was full by the time 7:30 came and we launched into our program. Beginning with some games and mixers, we ran off some of their energy and built rapport with the crowd. Then we led in some rousing group songs and began the concert portion of our program. Mixing up-beat music with short drama sketches, our four member team wove the message of a relevant God who knew them and loved them. Far from being distant and detached with some stained glass halo, this God even wrapped his son in skin to show he was serious about meeting these kids on their level. This Jesus was even willing to die to show us God’s love for us, and in doing so, he took the rap for our sins. Up till this point in the program there had been the normal Jr. High surface noise, but now they were totally quiet. More than most people would give them credit for, they were interested in hearing about God.

After the concert, 15 or 20 wanted to talk more. My group sat for about 45 minutes in our circle on the floor, working hard on some of the key questions of life. Toward the end, one of the older boys got a puzzled expression on his face and then asked a question that would burn in my mind for months, even years after that day. “If God is real, and he loved us enough to send his son to die for us, how come no one has told me about this before?”

I had no answer for him. It wasn’t that no one cared about the needs of teenagers in that community. The team of chaplains was doing a tremendous job, and had built a vibrant, caring community in the Chapel. They were taking initiative to provide youth programs, and were even visionary enough to design the youth outreach I was now taking part in. But I wondered about the scores who hadn’t come that night, kids who would need to be pursued and befriended before they would entrust someone with the spiritual questions of their life. Someone would need lots of time to get close to them and really understand their world. I thought about my youth pastor back home and the incredible impact he made on my life during my teenage years. I wished there was more that I could do.

It wasn’t the first time I had felt those feelings. My first exposure to military teenagers came in 1979, at Patrick Henry Village in Heidelberg, Germany. My father, Dick Patty, had just taken the role of European Director for OCSC, an organization that provided Christian “homes away from home,” for guys who were stationed with the military. Working in support of the chapel program, these staff members would provide Bible studies, fellowship, and discipleship for G.I.s in the warm environment of a home. Initially my sister and I planned to spend that year in college, but after further thought decided to join the rest of the family in the adventure of a move to Europe. Since I was headed toward youth ministry I took the initiative right away to meet with our chaplain, Richard Perkins, to see if there were any opportunities in the chapel youth program. He shared with me his vision for youth ministry there in Heidelberg and encouraged me to start some Bible studies for high school guys. I had the privilege of working

in depth with six guys that year, three of which later went on into full time Christian work. It was an exciting time as I watched these guys grow and even begin to have an impact on their friends. At the same time, I looked around at the 2000 teenagers in that community and wished there were some way I could do more.

Back at college in Portland, Oregon the next year my sister and I brainstormed to see if there was anything we could do for the kids in Germany during the summer. We recruited two other students who had a vision for youth ministry and some strong musical talents and formed a traveling youth ministry team, which we called “Malachi.” The name was chosen because of its Hebrew meaning, “my messenger,” and because it had a nice ring. We figured only a few teens would know it was also a book in the Bible. Building a repertoire of music and drama, as well as seminars designed especially for young people, we spent 10 weeks performing on military bases all throughout Europe. We ministered in all kind of settings, from retreats and chapel services to rallies, tents and mess halls. Two-thirds of our time was spent with teenagers, and the other third with soldiers and parents. Being trained and tooled up for youth ministry, we were able to provide a spark and momentum for chapel youth programs, as well as draw new kids into the ministries.

After that first summer there were many invitations to return, so we continued the ministry for the next four summers, expanding to two teams in 1983 and '84. These teams averaged 70 meetings a summer and provided resources for many Corps level camps and rallies as well.

In 1984 we were approached by several chaplains who wanted to do more in their chapel youth ministries. They asked if we could supply trained youth workers who would commit to spending several years in a community, working full time with the teenagers and providing leadership for the Chapel youth program. The director of OCSC, retired Navy Chaplain Dave Meschke, encouraged us to expand the young ministry resources we were providing to the military overseas to include full time youth workers. Thus, in 1984, “Malachi” became “Malachi Ministries” and, under the sponsorship of OCSC began to recruit several youth ministry graduates to work on overseas military bases.

A youthworker named Dan Hash was the first to arrive and began working under Chaplain (Maj) Bill Deleo at Benjamin Franklin village in Mannheim, Germany. A team consisting of Greg Carlson and Lori Endres joined Chaplain Brown at Pattonville near Stuttgart and several singing team members worked with Air Force Chaplain (Col) Bruce Coltharp in Sembach to begin a youth group there. These ministries grew rapidly as the youth workers built relationships with teens and developed solid programs. Total involvement in these programs more than tripled during that first year.

After observing the fruits of these ministries, several other chaplains asked if we could recruit workers for their chapel programs. We were able to do that in three more locations the next Fall, bringing the total number of communities with Malachi youthworkers to five in 1985.

The first full time ministry with Malachi staff on an Air Force base came in 1987 under the leadership of Ch (Col) Cal Bogart in Kaiserslautern.



This ministry grew from 25 to 200 teenagers in a year and a half, and included a youth choir with over 120 high school students.

Today, four years later, we are resourcing youth ministries in 13 military communities overseas, 10 army and 3 air force. Twelve of these are located in Germany and one in England. In some communities, as high as 20% of the teenagers are involved in the Chapel youth program. This tends to impact the entire community as these kids exert positive peer pressure on their circles of influence. A number of commanders have reported a quantitative decrease in cases of juvenile delinquency, alcohol abuse, and teen pregnancy, which they attribute to the impact of the youth group.

Now in Hanau, in the same DYA where I sat in a circle with those Jr. High boys, a group of teenagers meets every week to talk about God and what it means to have faith in Him. A young couple with four years of training in youth ministry devote their full time energies in reaching out to the kids of that community with the love of Jesus Christ. Providing leadership for the chapel youth program, and joined by a group of committed volunteers, they flesh out the chaplain's vision for the teenagers of Hanau. There is always more to do, but we have been very excited about the opportunities to provide kids with the kind of growing experiences they would have had in their church youth group in the States, as well as reach many teens who would never darken the door of a chapel on their own.

Our purpose statement reads as follows: "We exist to extend the chaplain's ministry by providing youth ministry resources to the American military overseas." These services fall into three major categories.

**Full time youthworkers.** Those who come on staff with Malachi ministries are required to have a degree in Bible or youth ministry, as well as at least a year of experience in a significant leadership role with youth. Four of our staff hold masters degrees in counseling or education. Since Malachi is an interdenominational organization, our staff come from a wide range of colleges and denominations. Once on the field, they receive training in issues related specifically to military ministry, as well as ongoing training and coaching designed to enhance their effectiveness. They are required to make a minimum of a two year commitment, though many continue longer than that. At the end of their term, Malachi takes responsibility for recruiting a replacement at the chaplain's request.

Since most military communities are not able to generate the funds needed to fully support a youthworker or a youth ministry team, Malachi staff raise a portion of their funding from interested individuals and churches in the states. This takes care of approximately half of their expenses—the other portion is covered by the military community where they serve. These local funds generally come from one of three sources, appropriated fund contracts, NAF contracts, or funds raised by a group of parents who put together a private organization in support of the youth program. Malachi continues to function as the youth ministry division of OCSC. Currently thirty are serving as youthworkers in Europe.

**Retreats and big events.** Malachi sponsors several retreats and large rallies for military teens. A Fall Jr. High retreat draws over four hundred kids to the Black Forest for a weekend of spiritual growth and a healthy dose of



good fun. Over Spring break, Malachi sponsors a week-long retreat to an island off the coast of Spain for high school students. Filling an entire hotel directly on the beach, a team of eighty youth workers, volunteers, and chaplains puts on a powerful program for close to 600 teens. A special speaker as well as a Christian musician are brought from the States to focus the spiritual challenge. This has been a life-changing experience for many students—as well as an adventure they will not soon forget!

During the summer, Malachi sponsors several mission projects designed to teach kids how to serve and broaden their world view. Last summer groups of teens went to Budapest, Czechoslovakia, and Belgium. In Budapest the students participated in an exchange with a group of Hungarian students, working with them to help establish a youth group in their area. The other two groups were involved in work projects, helping the national church tool up for some strategic ministries.

**Traveling Teams and Training.** During the summer a group of four college students are chosen to come to Europe as the “Malachi Singers.” Using the same basic format as our original ministry team, they travel to military bases, performing concerts and working with teens and soldiers. This team is often used by communities for a week long outreach to teens, or as the program for a special retreat.

Where Malachi staff are located, they recruit and train a team of volunteers who join together in ministry to teenagers. Training for these volunteers happens on a regular basis in their individual communities. However, Malachi also provides opportunities for training volunteers in communities that have no full time staff. A Fall youth workers retreat is designed for volunteers from any chapel program. Materials have also been developed specifically for the military setting, and these have been used to train volunteers in a wide range of locations across Europe and in Asia as well.

It is important to note that Malachi does not “own” the ministries they are involved in on a local level. These are chapel ministries and function under the full control and direction of the local chaplain. The staff members from Malachi are resources to provide a level of ministry that might not be otherwise possible. Because of that, each program has a unique name and individual characteristics based on the needs of the community and the priorities of the local chaplain. It is also our conviction that youth ministry be part of the overall thrust of a body of believers, rather than something isolated and out on its own.

That, then, is some of the history and personality of Malachi Ministries. We feel privileged to join with other youth ministry organizations, committed lay people, and military chaplains to reach out to teenagers on bases overseas with the love of Jesus Christ.

# 2000 years later, Christianity's biggest competition is still the Lions.

Before you sit down for an afternoon with the Lions, Bears, Dolphins, Rams, Cowboys or Vikings, come spend an hour with some very nice Christians in the love, worship and fellowship of Jesus Christ.



## **The Officer's Christian Fellowship: An Inquiry and Evaluation**

**Robert J. Phillips**

*Introduction.* The Officer's Christian Fellowship is prominent among parachurch groups in the military. Members are found at numerous bases, installations and deployed units throughout all branches of the service. Some chaplains have found that the OCF adds a pleasant and positive aroma to a balanced Command Religious Program. Other chaplains sniff less of an aroma and more of an odor, arising from unpleasant encounters with the group. Many chaplains have no firm opinion of the organization and have little direct knowledge of its practices and beliefs.

I have prepared this article to provide my colleagues in ministry with some background on the OCF, including its major objectives, beliefs and practices. An evaluation and assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization follows, concluding with some recommendations on the potential role of OCF in ministry to the military parish.

I have not prepared this article as a disinterested outsider. I have been a member of OCF for over ten years. I hold basic sympathy for many of its goals and have had some positive practical experiences with this organization in several settings. I also have had some negative experiences with OCF, as have a number of my brother and sister chaplains who come from a variety of theological backgrounds. "Just who ARE these people and what do they want?" can be a straightforward question or an expression of frustration. This article is an effort to respond to that question.

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## History

The OCF is an outgrowth of the British Officers' Christian Union.<sup>1</sup> In 1943, a small Bible study began in Washington, D.C., initiated by two British officers active in the OCU. A key member of this formative group was Army Brigadier General Hayes Kroner, who had been involved in the British OCU while assigned in England in 1938. The American version of the Officers' Christian Union, also named the OCU, was incorporated on 31 December, 1943. The stated purpose of the OCU was to develop a mutual support network among Christian officers, expressed in informal Bible studies and prayer.

Kroner served as president of the OCU for eleven years. The organization was hit hard by the demobilization after World War Two, but partly recovered by expanding its focus to the military academies. The first OCU banquet for midshipmen and cadets was held in 1948, following the Army-Navy football game. Lieutenant General William K. Harrison, Jr., later a mainstay in the organization, was guest speaker. Harrison eventually would serve as President from 1954-1972, continuing the tradition of a flag officer in that position. The President as of this writing is RADM Grady Jackson, USN.

In 1951, Cleo Buxton was named the first General Secretary of the OCU. A Princeton Seminary graduate and combat infantry officer during World War Two, Buxton moved into his new position from another parachurch job, regional director of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship.

In 1951, the OCU counted 50 members and 75 people on the mailing list. By 1957, membership had expanded to over 1,600 officers and associates. Membership grew to 2,000 by 1968. As of 31 January, 1991, the organization numbers 6,839 regular members and 2,231 associate members.<sup>2</sup>

In 1972, Paul Pettijohn replaced Buxton, who moved to another military parachurch organization, ACCTS (Assoc. for Christian Conferences, Teaching and Service). A former Air Force officer, Pettijohn continues in that position as of this writing. Other full time staff have joined the organization at various times, often recently retired officers. Some have received theological training, usually at evangelical Protestant seminaries such as Conservative Baptist Seminary in Denver.

In January, 1972, the organization changed its name to the Officers' Christian Fellowship. This was done to avoid the impression it was a "union" in a labor sense and to focus on the emphasis on fellowship within the organization. Retreat centers were acquired in Spring Canyon, Colorado

<sup>1</sup>The historical section of this article is drawn from "To God Be the Glory: A brief history of the Officers' Christian Fellowship of the U.S.A.," written by Don and Karen Martin and published in *Command Magazine*, vol. 34, number 4, 1986, pages 11-26, 36.

<sup>2</sup>The 1991 membership figure is drawn from a STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP report provided by OCF headquarters. 42% are drawn from the Army, 27% from the Air Force, 18% from the Navy, 4.5% from the Marine Corps, 3.5% from the Coast Guard, and 5.6% from the Public Health Service and interested civilians. 40% of OCF's current membership have been members less than 5 years and 70% have been members less than 10 years.



and White Sulphur Springs, Pennsylvania. Year round programs are held for families, singles, active duty and military academy or ROTC students.

## Organization & Beliefs

The leadership of OCF is both national and regional/local. The OCF Council consists of 21 military officers who are elected by the membership for three-year terms. This group meets twice yearly to deal with policies, programs and budgets. The Executive Director also is a member of this body. In addition, OCF paid staff serve to implement policies and provide administrative assistance. The number of full-time staff is kept small by design, in order to place primary responsibility for OCF ministry in the hands of local representatives and to reduce the need for personnel fundraising.

Local representatives are chosen from among the active duty, reserve and retired communities to provide leadership at individual commands. They are drawn from those who have been active in OCF and have a desire to fill such a position. It is important to note that these positions are volunteer. They are not paid by the organization and may or may not have specific training for the position (although such training is encouraged by the OCF home office at regional seminars offered on a periodic basis).

In calendar year 1990, the total audited income of OCF was \$2,078,034.<sup>3</sup> Over 60% of the income was derived from donations, with another 26% coming from conference center receipts. Expenditures included 35.6% for the conference centers, 22.5% for support of regional ministries, 13.7% for administrative support, 11.5% for communications, and the balance distributed among debt service, fund raising, and the Gateway program for ministry development. The organization is a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability and regularly publishes the results of independent audits in its membership newsletter.

The OCF publishes a number of resources. Their quarterly magazine is *Command*, which contains articles contributed by members and staff. Thematic issues have dealt with "War and Peace," "Deployment," "Family Issues" and the like. Booklets on subjects such as *Service Separations*, *May a Christian Serve in the Military?*, and *Supporting Your Chaplain* may be purchased at nominal cost. Samples of these resources are sent without cost to chaplains on request. A monthly newsletter and prayer reminder are sent to all members, which focuses on prayer requests received at the home office.

Installations with an OCF presence normally will have one or more Bible studies sponsored by the group. A monthly or quarterly "pray and plan" session is encouraged, in which members meet for prayer and discussion of other avenues of outreach and mutual support. The home office provides a computer printout of known OCF members in the area to the local

<sup>3</sup>Financial information is drawn from "1990 Year-End Financial Report and Plans for 1991," prepared by Paul Pettijohn and published in the March, 1991 issue of the OCF newsletter.

representative. The prayer reminder focuses on requests received at the home office.

The OCF does not have a formal creed. The Constitution of OCF does include a "Statement of Doctrine," to which elected officers, council members, the Executive Director and Field Staff personnel must subscribe. Required are belief in the Trinity, the verbal inspiration of scripture, the virgin birth, vicarious death, literal resurrection and literal return of Christ. Nothing in the doctrinal statement is inconsistent with the teachings of most conservative Protestant churches or many mainline churches, for that matter. A Statement of Faith defines its understanding of who is a Christian, while its Statement of Participation expresses the group's expectations of those who affiliate with it.<sup>4</sup> They are listed below.

## Statement of Faith

Inasmuch as I am a sinner and deserve the wrath of God, and since Jesus Christ died for my sins, was buried, and has been bodily resurrected, according to the Scriptures, I have accepted Him as my personal Lord and Savior and am saved by His grace alone.

## Statement of Participation

I understand the objectives of the OCF. As an expression of my commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and those objectives, I intend, by God's grace, to participate actively and prayerfully in the ministry of OCF with my time, talents, spiritual gifts, and resources.

The OCF has a list of twelve objectives, known as the "Operating Principles." A recent issue of *Command Magazine* was given to a discussion of these principles, with each article prepared by a major leader in the organization and discussed further by an OCF member "in the trenches." The principles are listed below.<sup>5</sup>

## OCF Operating Principles

1. Personal Bible Study, Prayer and Obedience
2. The Family
3. Professional Excellence
4. Personal Ministries
5. Prayer
6. Local Fellowship
7. Evangelize and Make Disciples
8. Special Events
9. Stewardship

<sup>4</sup>Both of these are found in the brochure, published by the organization.

<sup>5</sup>The substance and discussion of these principles can be found in *Command* (vol. 39, no. 4) Winter 1990-91.

10. Chaplain Support
11. Media Ministry
12. International Ministries

Many of the local leaders of the OCF are drawn from more conservative Protestant sources. However, the group is open to any who are interested in the emphases of their organization, which is evangelism and spiritual growth in the military services. I am personally aware of at least two OCF groups in my active duty Navy career that were led by senior officers who were practicing Catholics.

## The Role of OCF

A theological frame of reference is needed to make sense of what role this organization can play in a healthy Command Religious Program. Chaplains differ in their understanding of the nature and propriety of parachurch groups. Parachurch groups, unlike regular faith groups, lack the same kind of claim to official standing on military installations. The OCF is not a recognized faith group and finds that virtually all of its “members” already are represented in the chaplaincy through denominational or umbrella endorsing agencies.

One of the pressures in military ministry, as in civilian parish settings, is to respond to ambiguous situations by exchanging theological reflection for a “Mr. Goodwrench” ministry. That approach embraces or rejects parachurch groups on the basis of whether it seems to work and whether it plugs or causes leaks in the Ship of Zion, a.k.a. the Command Religious Program. This attitude runs the risk of creating an atmosphere for a reactive ministry. Taking the initiative to engage the issue of the parachurch from the perspective of one’s theology makes possible a proactive ministry. The chaplain is better able to integrate the reality of such groups into a theologically and institutionally coherent program.

Richard Hutcheson, Jr., retired Rear Admiral in the Navy Chaplain Corps and mainline Presbyterian pastor/author, has written insightfully on the sociological and theological nature of parachurch groups. Borrowing from the work of Ralph Winter, Arthur Glasser and traditional Roman Catholic thought, he speaks of the difference between “sodality” and “modality” in religious groups. The former is “a society with religious or charitable objects,” while the latter speaks of official governing structures for denominations. Through its religious orders, the Roman Catholic church has found a place for sodality groups within the larger context of the church. Protestant philanthropic groups have somewhat paralleled this development, but more often Protestant churches have tended to resist sodality impulses that do not clearly fall within defined organizational modality boundaries.<sup>6</sup>

Hutcheson argues that official mainline leaders are wise to accept the presence of parachurch and sodality groups, working to include them within

<sup>6</sup>Richard Hutcheson, Jr., *Mainline Churches and the Evangelicals*, (Atlanta, John Knox Press, 1981), pp. 62-64. This is part of his insightful chapter, “Parachurch organizations: second home for mainline evangelicals.” Though a decade old, the chapter bears close re-reading by any who minister in a pluralistic setting.



the umbrella of the denomination at large. If one substitutes the “Command Religious Program” as the official religious presence, a similar point can be made. If a parachurch group can meet legitimate religious concerns that other parts of the official program cannot effectively address, this need not become an inherent cause for conflict.

The ecclesiology of military chaplains vary with their faith group traditions. Within my own Wesleyan tradition, there is a good deal of ambiguity surrounding the notion of a church within a church. Wesley defended his Methodist renewal movement within the Church of England by grounding it in the missional nature of the church. Form proceeds from function, which in turn derives from the fundamental mission. On this basis, Wesley could defend his Methodist movement as an effective tool in advancing the mission of the church, while still arguing his loyalty to the established church.<sup>7</sup>

An inclusive ministry in which the primary objective is to meet the spiritual needs of God’s people in the armed forces allows the chaplain great leeway in responding to parachurch groups. If the chaplain honestly feels parachurch groups have no theological or institutional legitimacy, then the stage has been set for inevitable misunderstanding with groups such as the OCF.<sup>8</sup>

## Possibilities for Service

The OCF can help the chaplain in speaking to a number of religious needs within the command. First, it can provide an outlet for more evangelically-oriented officers to study the Bible in a setting consistent with their spiritual background. It is interesting that nothing in the Article of Faith for OCF argues for a particular understanding of issues such as the inerrancy or infallibility of scripture. On the other hand, chaplains usually can assume that those active in OCF studies tend to move in that direction, consistent with the conservative Protestant context in which the organization arose and was nourished.

Within the “officer only” setting, officers and spouses can share some of the pressures unique to their dual roles of officers and Christians. Such sharing is more difficult, if not impossible, where enlisted personnel are part

<sup>7</sup>Howard Snyder, a Free Methodist, has written an informative study of this issue, based on his doctoral work at Notre Dame. *The Radical Wesley and Patterns of Church Renewal* (Downer’s Grove, Intervarsity Press, 1980), pp. 67-89. Also see David Watson’s dissertation, completed at Duke University and published as *The Early Methodist Class Meeting* (Nashville, Discipleship Resources, 1985, Chapter 5 on “The Class Meeting in Wesley’s Ecclesiology.”

<sup>8</sup>Jerry White, CEO of the Navigators, has written an interesting book, *The Church and the Parachurch* (Portland, Mulnomah, 1983). He argues para-local churches (his preferred term) can work with and within local churches to focus on needs that larger congregations and pastors lack time or gifts to address. His theological justification for parachurch groups, however, is rooted in a congregational ecclesiology, in which the local congregation is supreme. Those who share that ecclesiology are more likely to follow his derivative arguments than others. The book does have great value in some specific comments on strengths and weaknesses in parachurch groups as well as in sharing a frame of reference for this ministry that appears to be internally consistent IF one accepts the premises!



of the group. One may argue that any group of Christians ought to be able to discuss any sort of problem without reference to social differences. In numerous settings, however, the reality is otherwise. Indeed, some enlisted would be uncomfortable discussing certain types of problems where officers are present.

Second, OCF leadership and members can become vital to other aspects of the Command Religious Program. In some chapel settings, OCF provides the ushers or oversees the recruitment of Sunday School teachers. OCF members can be active in choir membership, in leadership of CRP Bible studies and support groups that are not “official” OCF studies. OCF members can contribute to chapel council leadership and often are exceptional in their financial stewardship in military chapels.

At one command, a newly reporting chaplain found no Sunday School program whatsoever at the chapel. Presenting the need to OCF members at the base, he met a positive response. Eventually, personnel active in OCF became the backbone of the developing children’s program as well as leaders and participants in some new adult classes.

In a booklet on the subject of support for chaplains, Paul Rousch reflects OCF policies in calling for positive and active participation in chapel programs. He contends that such participation is consistent with the OCF goal of spiritual outreach in the military and that this outreach is facilitated by being where military people are most likely to gather for religious purposes. In reasoning reminiscent of Wesley’s justification of his Methodists, Rousch writes, “The end is outreach. The means is service within the chapel program.”<sup>9</sup>

Third, OCF resources can be most helpful to chaplains. Many of their printed resources, such as *Command Magazine*, booklets on deployment and the like can be positive additions to literature made available to servicepeople and dependents. The booklets are constructive in tone, grind no theological axes and offer specific suggestions for dealing with some predictable adjustment problems faced by Christians of all backgrounds.

## Problems

Jerry White in *The Church & the Para-church* addresses several concerns and potential areas of weakness or conflict between parachurch groups and “official” ministries. Four of the areas he mentions have particular relevance in confronting some of the touchy areas between the OCF and military chaplains.<sup>10</sup>

The first concern is the lack of accountability. OCF policy is strongly supportive of the role of chaplains. Chapel participation likewise is encouraged, though is not (and cannot be) required by the organization. However, a number of chaplains have found local OCF groups working independent of

<sup>9</sup>Paul Rousch, *Supporting Your Chaplain* (Englewood, CO, OCF, 1987), p. 14. Rousch retired as a colonel in the Marine Corps, served as the OCF representative at the Naval Academy, and now is on the faculty of the Academy in the Department of Leadership and Law.

<sup>10</sup>White, pp 89-94. Each of the four concerns mentioned above comes from White.

Command Religious Programs and resistant to any viable accountability to chaplains for what they do.

The strength of OCF in relying on volunteers to serve as their representatives also can become a weakness. OCF national leadership cannot hold local leaders accountable to policies to the same degree possible for groups with more paid staff. While national leaders can and will relieve representatives of their titles where gross violations come to their attention, the accountability link often is blurred.

A second concern is non-support of the local church/chapel. Often this is rooted in a spiritual elitism that troubles military chaplains regardless of theological background. At one command a senior retired officer who served as an OCF liaison explained his reluctance to participate in military chapels as rooted in a desire to "fellowship in a serious church rather than a congregation where there is a spectrum of wheat and tares." This person had actively participated in military chapels at several points, but found affiliation with a local congregation more conducive to personal theological preferences. Despite a strong national OCF policy encouraging chapel participation, many individual members feel uncomfortable doing so.

Chaplains develop sensitivity to the use of key religious terms, such as "Christian," in a pluralistic setting. Some parachurch military members refer to "the Christians" at this chapel, or that unit, as a synonym for members of their group. The implication, even if unintended, is those who are not involved with the group somehow do not measure up to the title. In my experience, nothing disturbs chaplains more than the perception that some OCF members practice spiritual elitism.

Rousch makes oblique reference to one reason a number of OCF members ignore military chapels the concern for the religious education of their children. He seeks to defuse the issues when he says, "The primary reason OCF members object to chapel attendance is the concern that chapel programs will not adequately nurture their children. Underlying this concern is the presupposition that there exists a place where someone, in about 45 minutes per week, will have significant spiritual impact upon children."<sup>11</sup>

Regardless of the reasons, a number of OCF Bible studies and local leaders regularly distance themselves from chapel involvement, even if a fellow OCF member/chaplain is leading that program. The desire of military personnel to affiliate with local churches of their own spiritual tradition must be respected. For OCF members who have united with an organization given to outreach in the military, working out a positive relationship with the Command Religious Program can be difficult if chaplains and chapel programs are viewed from a distance.

Third, local OCF groups can focus too much on an individual. Charismatic leadership or geographic longevity run the risk of linking a local OCF identity to a particular individual, clouding the overall objectives of the organization. This is especially true when leaders are drawn from retired ranks who hold their position indefinitely. Laypeople with strong spiritual gifts can be a great asset to any ministry, provided they seek and accept

<sup>11</sup>Rousch, p.4.

accountability. The shadow side of this strength is that the personality of the leader can so define the group that, on his or her departure, the group disintegrates. "Some ministries can even emerge as an ego satisfaction for one who cannot function under the leadership of others and needs "his own work" to feel fulfilled."<sup>12</sup>

A fourth concern is what White calls, a "lack of balance." Parachurch groups often refract an understanding of the Gospel and the Christian faith through a selectively narrow lens. A highly individualistic ecclesiology can become married to a "Lone Ranger" religion. Dimensions to total discipleship, ranging from sacramental life to Christian social consciousness, can fall through the cracks. The time demands of the group can displace other spiritual emphases to the point where Sunday morning worship becomes little more than a hiccup amid the full meal of demands placed on the person by the parachurch group. The down side can be a growing inability on the part of the parachurch member to constructively integrate into any local church or chapel setting.

## **Problems with Chaplains**

The traffic can flow both ways in assessing problems between parachurch groups such as OCF and military chaplains. There have been occasions where OCF members who were positive in support of the Command Religious Program have been driven away by the hostility or disdain of chaplains who have theological or personality disagreements with the group. Some OCF members have had themselves labeled fundamentalist, which was functionally defined as "too little 'fun,' too much 'damn,' and too little 'mental.'" The stage is set for conflict and miscommunication when sarcastic or condemnatory signals are sent to individuals simply because they are active in a parachurch group.

At one command, a chaplain routinely was invited to attend and/or to lead an OCF group on the base. He persistently refused to visit the group, even after this informal gathering came to draw more personnel than his principal Sunday worship service. The OCF leader for the study, who had been active in the chapel program, picked up on the rejection and eventually became so uncomfortable that he felt compelled to withdraw from the chapel.

A second difficulty with chaplains can be failure to utilize OCF members after they present themselves for service. Sometimes the member is so conservative that the chaplain feels that this member would not integrate well into some programs. That need not eliminate them from all involvement. Any person who is willing to serve and to be accountable for that service to the chaplain is an asset to ministry. Holding these people at arm's length risks frustrating some well-intentioned servants.

At one installation, an OCF member presented himself to the chaplain for use in a Bible study or Sunday School setting in the chapel. The chaplain assessed the program and the strengths of this person. The result was

<sup>12</sup>White, p. 92.



another adult class led by this individual that drew a number of officers and non-officers who were attending chapel but not staying for the current offering of educational programs.

A third difficulty with chaplains can be double standards. OCF members and groups may be faulted for failure to participate in chapel programs by virtue of affiliation with an organization that encourages that involvement. However, the issue and parameters of local church participation is murky for many chaplains as well. It is not unknown for some chaplains at a command to immerse themselves in Sunday commitments at local churches of their faith group, with the result being erratic availability to installation chapel ministry. To be sure, this is a sensitive and many-sided issue. It is fair to acknowledge that some of the same dynamics of choice for chaplains also apply to the laity in OCF.

## Conclusions

The Officers' Christian Fellowship, in common with other parachurch groups, can be a positive addition or a potential subtraction from a balanced Command Religious Program. Chaplains can take the lead in creating a constructive working relationship with OCF members. It involves a continuous education process within parachurch groups on the inclusive nature of the CRP and within the chaplaincy on the legitimate role groups like OCF can play in the inclusive setting.

Many service people, raised in civilian religious settings, simply are unaware of the professional context in which military ministry occurs, and lack a clear sense of the chaplain's role. The chaplain must remain in a training mode with these people on issues such as the difference between consulting with a chaplain and merely informing him or her regarding religious events. Chaplains also can nurture the vision that religious ministry at a military unit is under the umbrella of the Command Religious Program and not free-lance efforts with no accountability to the commanding officer of that unit.

Communicating a sense of collegiality and affirmation also can go far to defuse potential tension or conflict and kindle a healthy sense of teamwork focused on shared goals. As ship and base chaplain, I have visited a number of religious gatherings that were not of my tradition nor high on my personal spiritual agenda. However, such visits have paid dividends in conveying my support for meeting the religious needs of others, providing personal insight into what happens at these groups, and expanding my own spiritual sensitivities. Where miscommunication occurs, the chaplain who assumes it is the result of honest error rather than malicious intent will be in a better position to build rapport with the variety of spiritual "special interest groups" at the command.

This, of course, must be coupled with the willingness to call to account any group or individual whose actions breed divisiveness that threatens the good order and discipline of a unit. Chaplain feedback to the commanding officer on the existence and contributions/problems with parachurch groups on base can help ensure a unified and appropriate professional



response to issues that might arise. In the event of conflicts, the OCF national or regional staff can be notified. OCF staff strongly affirms the policy of working through and with chaplains in a cooperative context and are willing to intervene when problems are brought to their attention.

The Officers' Christian Fellowship is not for everyone. Like any religious affiliate group with nearly 10,000 members, it numbers both sheep and goats, depending on who is classifying the stock! Where local OCF groups have a vision of the purposes for the organization and a mature understanding of their place within a CRP, great possibilities for good exist.

The chaplain who begins from a positive frame of reference, coupled with a loving spirit and clear standards of accountability for the group, helps to set the stage for a constructive and mutually beneficial relationship. OCF individuals or groups who resist CRP guidelines and their organization's national policies can be handled case by case. OCF individuals and groups who embrace these guidelines and policies can become tremendous assets to chaplains in a total ministry to God's people in the military.

# He didn't rise from the dead to hunt Easter eggs.

This year instead of getting on your knees to hunt Easter eggs,  
rise up and join us thanking God for the gift of everlasting life.



## Mass Casualty Ministry—Luby's Cafeteria

### Larry R. Wedel

On 16 October 1991 at approximately 1239 hours a 35-year old man drove his pickup truck through the front glass window at Luby's Cafeteria, Killeen, Texas. He jumped out of the truck and began shooting people who had gone to Luby's for lunch. In less than ten minutes 23 people, including the gunman, were dead and 15-25 were injured with various degrees of gun shot wounds. He committed suicide before it was all over. This incident became the single worst mass shooting in the history of the United States.

16 October 1991 was like any other day at Darnall Army Community Hospital (DACH), Fort Hood, Texas. Chaplain (MAJ) Jere R. Kimmell, the ward chaplain, was scheduled to attend a mandatory OSHA class on Hazardous Communication and I was preparing to visit some patients after having spent the morning with administrative matters. The office phone rang at approximately 1300 hours and the emergency room (ER) receptionist simply said, "We are going to need a chaplain up here." I asked her what the situation was and was told that between 15-25 people would be arriving at the ER with gun shot wounds.

I left a note for Specialist James V. Foudy, my chaplain assistant, to meet me in the ER upon his return from lunch. I called the III Corps and Fort Hood Chaplain, Ch (COL) Don C. Breland, and told his office to locate him and let him know that we had a mass casualty situation on our hands. I ran to the auditorium and got Chaplain Kimmell out of his class and we headed to the ER. Upon arrival we were again told that between 15-25 wounded would be arriving any moment.

I again called the III Corps Chaplain's Office to see if contact had been made with Chaplain Breland. I also informed the chaplain assistant

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Chaplain (LTC) Larry R. Wedel, a General Association of General Baptist Chaplain, is Chief, Department of Ministry and Pastoral Care, Darnall Army Community Hospital, Fort Hood, Texas. He holds a Master of Divinity from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky and a Master of Education from Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts.

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who answered the phone that we would need additional help and to call several UMTs and have them meet me at the ER. At that time I did not know the exact number of casualties arriving nor did I know how many family members would also be coming to the hospital.

My mind immediately flashed back to the time I coordinated pastoral care to the victims of the Ramstein Airshow Disaster (*Military Chaplain's Review*, Spring, 1989). During that disaster my son was missing for over five hours and my wife and I did not know whether he was alive or dead. I made one more phone call to see whether my twenty-year old son and my wife were at home. To my relief both were there. Once I knew they were safe I knew I would be better able to provide ministry to those arriving at the hospital.

## **Pastoral Ministry to Family Members, Friends, or Injured**

I returned to the ER and within a few minutes Chaplain Breland and several other UMTs began arriving. We huddled and I briefed them on the known situation and I began making assignments as to where UMTs should be located. Two chaplains were posted in the ER waiting room to intercept any family members arriving; two chaplains escorted arriving patients to the delayed treatment holding area, and two chaplains along with their assistants went to the auditorium to set up the family assistance center. As family members arrived they were escorted to the family assistance center which was out of the patient flow areas and on a lower floor of the hospital. Prayer, counsel, and encouragement were provided by the UMTs.

Initial triage occurred both inside and outside of Luby's Cafeteria. Most patients were brought to Darnall Hospital and to the nearby civilian hospital by ground ambulance. Two of the most critically wounded arrived by Army Medevac helicopter. Patients were again triaged by the ER staff. During the next hour the ER staff was extremely busy accepting patients and providing care to the injured. Five patients remained at Darnall. Two were listed as Very Seriously Ill (VSI) and three were listed as Seriously Ill (SI). Of the two Very Seriously Ill one died three days later (bringing the total dead to 24) and the other was transferred for definitive care to a civilian hospital in Temple, Texas (approximately 20 miles from Killeen/Fort Hood.) Other arriving patients were treated and released.

Chaplain Kimmell and I moved through the ER talking with the wounded who were able to communicate, giving them encouragement, and insuring religious ministrations were provided if desired. The Catholic chaplain provided pastoral care for the sick to those patients identified as Catholic.

Information was received that we could expect several dead on arrival (DOA). We did not know the total number nor did we know whether family members would be arriving to inquire of their loved ones. Calls came on three separate occasions requesting chaplain assistance at Luby's. Chaplain Breland and I dispatched chaplains and chaplain assistants to respond to family needs there. After the third call for UMTs, Chaplain Breland left DACH and went to the Luby's Cafeteria location to assess needs there.

Trauma victims from Luby's and arriving family members were taken to the adjacent Sheraton Plaza Hotel where rooms were made available for responding UMTs, local pastors, Army psychiatrists, and other counselors to work with them.

Local civilian authorities decided to transport those who died at the scene directly to the Dallas Medical Examiner for autopsy. As a result, none of the dead came to the hospital.

Specialist Foudy provided the logistics in setting up the Family Assistance Center. He secured cold drinks (water and kool-aid) from the dining facility and a large tray filled with various types of fruit. He returned to his office where he began to secure specific information regarding the status of patients so that the UMT working with family members would know the status of their loved ones.

UMTs in the Family Support Center sat with family members and provided comfort and encouragement while they anxiously awaited word on the status of their family members. UMTs worked closely with representatives from Social Work Services and the Personnel Administration Division in attempting to identify victims and to which hospital they were taken.

## **Staff and Family Support**

UMTs were assigned specifically to work with victims and family members of those identified as Very Seriously (VSI) and Seriously Ill (SI). Family members were escorted to waiting rooms outside the Intensive Care and on the patient care wards. Chaplains worked closely with their assigned waiting family and insured they were comfortable. Chaplains secured information from the surgical suite information desk, the recovery room, and the intensive care ward. Appropriate information was provided to the victims' family members. Specific medical information was not provided. Family and friends were assured that as soon as the medical staff could do so they would be provided the desired information.

At 1500 hours, approximately two hours after the initial mass casualty notification, things were quiet enough in the ER for us to have an initial debriefing. Dr. (COL) Robert Visintine, Chief, Emergency Medicine, asked me to lead the debriefing. Anyone who worked in or around the ER to include the ambulance personnel and receptionists were encouraged to participate. Approximately 75 crowded into a class room. Dr. Visintine began the debriefing by sharing his experiences and feelings. I led the group in exploring their experiences and feelings and emphasized the normalcy of their feelings. I also briefed them what they could experience in the future as well as "danger signs" to look for. I encouraged them to seek counsel if need be. The group requested I close in prayer.

Additional debriefings for hospital staff were scheduled for the next day. Chaplain Kimmell and I were group facilitators. Department Chiefs were encouraged to provide debriefings for their personnel. Two special services were scheduled for staff. A memorial service was held for one of the hospital housekeeping ladies who was killed. A special Service of Remembrance was held for staff and patients. The service remembered and

honored those who were killed, those who survived, and those who responded by providing care and comfort.

Chaplain Breland held a debriefing session for all responding UMTs—those who worked at the hospital and those who went to Luby's and the Sheraton Plaza Hotel. An examination of the Mass Casualty Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was also included in the debriefing.

## **Continuing Pastoral Care**

Two VSI and three SI were admitted to the hospital. The mother and mother-in-law of a husband and wife who were admitted was killed at Luby's. Being injured themselves they were unable to attend her funeral. A brief memorial service was held in the hospital room with friends and family present.

One VSI patient died three days after the incident. I had spent hours with the family and was asked by the family to participate in the funeral service. For me this was a time of closure.

The other VSI patient was transferred to another hospital in Temple, Texas. Because of the emotional attachment to the patient and family I found it necessary to process my feelings around the transfer. A part of me wanted to stay "plugged in" with the family and patient while another part of me wanted him to go where he could best receive care.

Because of the intense interest in the patients, large numbers of family and friends descended on the hospital. The ICU waiting room and outside hall way was clogged with people. The ICU staff requested that Chaplain Kimmell and I run "interference" between the patients and their injured loved ones. We did this for several days until patients were transferred to civilian facilities.

## **Lessons and Concluding Remarks**

1. UMTs should be familiar with both their post and hospital mass casualty SOP. The Darnall Hospital Department of Ministry and Pastoral Care has a Mass Casualty SOP as does III Corps and Fort Hood. No adjustments needed to be made to the hospital SOP, and only minor adjustments needed to be made to the III Corps and Fort Hood Chaplain Mass Casualty SOP. I circulated throughout the hospital and made UMT assignments based on family and religious needs. One Jewish chaplain, two Catholic chaplains, and approximately ten Protestant chaplains plus their assistants were available for ministry at the hospital. Ministry to victims and family members was outstanding.
2. Communication between the mass casualty site and the hospital is critical. This is one area that must continually be examined and improved. Telephone lines into Fort Hood were overloaded. Primary communication occurred with cellular phones. It is imperative chaplains insure they have available a minimum of one cellular phone at the casualty site and one at the hospital.



3. Normally more UMTs will respond than are needed. The supervising chaplain must insure the responding UMTs are made to feel their efforts are appreciated.
4. UMTs should be prepared to deal with the news media. No one should make statements to the press without the approval and clearance of the public affairs officer. No medical information should ever be released by a member of the UMT.
5. UMTs and responding individuals must learn to care for themselves. When stressed, time out must be taken. There comes a point when ministry becomes counter-productive if the one providing ministry fails to take care of him/herself. Debriefing of UMTs are imperative.
6. Responding UMTs need to be sensitive to any emotional attachment they may form with patients and family members. Termination must be made in a manner which insures emotional health.
7. Families of hospitalized victims had local civilian pastors. It is imperative that the military chaplain provide pastoral care to the victims and family members but be sensitive to the rights of the civilian pastor. Military chaplains should not attempt to take the place of the civilian pastor but should compliment the pastoral care the civilian pastor provides.

The hurt and sorrow continues. People congregate at Luby's Cafeteria and pray, stand and look at the building, or talk with the police officer on guard. The local newspaper daily updates the community on the status of those still hospitalized. Civilian pastors, ministry chaplains, social workers, and mental health workers assist people in attempting to put meaning to the tragedy. The desire for closure is evident as we read the letters to the editor in the local newspaper, talk with friends, or drive by Luby's and view the floral arrangements lining the front of the building.

Long term care for surviving victims and family members of those killed must and will continue in the days or months ahead. One day the pain and hurt will disappear but the memory will remain.





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## Book Reviews

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### **Crack Cocaine: A Practical Treatment Approach For the Chemically Dependent**

***Barbara C. Wallace, Ph.D..***

***Brunner/Mazel Publishers, New York, 1991***

***Hard Cover, 304 pages, \$36.95***

Barbara Wallace, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor, Department of Health Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York.

Why has crack-cocaine smoking become so widespread across the United States? Why has William Bennett (director of Federal Drug Policy) referred to crack as our biggest and most immediate problem? Dr. Barbara Wallace uses these questions to begin a clear historical overview in her book, *Crack Cocaine*.

Crack smoking is no longer just an inner-city, low-income, largely minority problem. A recent Senate Judiciary Committee set the figure of cocaine addicts as 2.2 million. Crack-cocaine smoking has replaced heroin use as the main illicit drug problem confronting our nation. Until now, the strategies used with victims of this new epidemic have been those transposed from work with heroin addicts and alcoholics. These treatment strategies have often been inadequate because of the different challenges the crack-cocaine smoker presents, even from that of the intranasal cocaine user.

Dr. Barbara Wallace reports her experience working in the first inpatient detoxification crack unit in New York City. As a result, she is one of the first to write specifically on the challenges in treating the compulsive crack-cocaine smoker. Basically, her book is the how and why treatment programs were altered to meet the uniqueness of this new group. The author first looks at the biopsychosocial dynamics of crack addiction. She then deals with the neurochemical dimension and how it differs from that of other drug induced addictions.

The focus is then turned to a discussion of three equally important treatment foundations: pharmacology, psychodynamics, and behavioral. Building upon these theoretical foundations, Wallace analyzes several crack treatment models. The essentials of any model includes an intensive inpa-

tient detoxification, followed by a residence in a therapeutic community, and outpatient aftercare.

Whatever the model, Wallace urges the need for professionals at every phase, the usefulness of a 12 Step Program, and continued group support.

The book concludes with a review of clinical techniques used during the assessment and treatment stages with special emphasis on relapse prevention.

*Crack Cocaine* provides a wealth of information, theories, strategies, and treatment programs for those working with the chemically dependent. A real plus is that it is written by one who has had first-hand clinical experience with crack cocaine smokers. It's implications are far reaching and extremely valuable for anyone in the people-helping business.

Chaplain (Major), Joel W. Cocklin  
U..S. Army

## **“Now Choose Life,” Conversion as the Way of Life**

*William A. Barry, S.J.*

***Paulist Press, ISBN: 0-8091-3230-3, 115 pp (pbk) Cost: \$5.95.***

William A. Barry, S.J., rector of the Jesuit community at Boston College and a spiritual director, writes with more authority than most clergy on the topic, “Conversion as the Way to Life.” As a Catholic, his book is delightfully evangelical in content, style and tone.

The thesis is simple: Jesus calls all people “to repent and believe the good news” which means “they must somehow turn away from the illusory God and toward the real God.” Barry explores the diverse ways people construct all sorts of illusory deities, from projections of human father’s traits onto the divine, to the entanglement of one’s self-image with their image of God. With careful attention to Scripture’s truth and reality (synonyms for Barry), he discusses how such illusions of the Almighty develop and how to get rid of them. Of particular help to chaplains is the realistic way he deals with evil in our lives. Not to be quickly salved with the balm of salvation, yet ultimately, once honestly faced, it is cured only by the grace of God’s forgiveness. Then our Lord challenges us blessed ones to turn, to be converted daily, from our tendency to continue self-centeredly and become “blessers” of others.

Barry echoes Jesus’ call to be disciples, not out of sheer obedience, but from the joy of being totally free from all illusions. By learning about our Lord through Scripture study, we Christians will become intimate with him, and thus “little Christs” to our broken world. We will find our Lord walks with us through all the various valleys, hillsides, and mountaintops of life, leading us to fuller and fuller discipleship.

“Now Choose Life” is a brief introduction into Christian lifestyle but

it is by no means lightweight. Barry challenges his readers to repent and be converted, not just once in a lifetime, but “every day, and many times every day at that.” Not just a book for clergy, neither is it for the nominal Christian. This is an engaging and readable work all serious Chaplains should read.

LCDR Norman F. Brown, CNC,  
U.S. Navy

## Matters of Life And Death

*John B. Cobb, Jr.*

*Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991, Soft cover, 124 pages,  
\$9.95*

John B. Cobb, Jr. is Professor of Theology, Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, California. He is author of *Process Theology as Political Theology* and *Christ in a Pluralistic Age*, and coauthor of *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition*.

John Cobb uses this book to bring his own theological point of view to bear on some significant issues of controversy in contemporary society. He admits that he is not a specialist in ethical issues. He believes that “the question of basic point of view is, at least for Christians, a theological one.” (p.8) He proceeds to address the topics from the basis of his reflections on the Christian faith.

Cobb’s book has four chapters, each treating a different issue. Chapter One, The Right To Kill, discusses life in general and the more specific issue of human life. This chapter addresses the role of the human life in relationship to other forms of life such as animal life and the environment.

The second chapter, The Right to Die, addresses the right to terminate one’s life when it becomes permanently meaningless and painful. His focus is on the right of individuals to make decisions about themselves (suicide), rather than the right to make decisions about others (euthanasia).

Chapter Three, The Right to Live, focuses on the issue of abortion. Discussions frequently polarize over the rights of the mother and the rights of the fetus. Cobb tries to address them together and look at how the rights of the fetus are affected by the rights of others.

The last chapter, The Right to Love, addresses sexuality. Cobb offers some general ideas relevant to thinking about sexuality. He addresses more specifically premarital sexual intercourse and homosexuality. Cobb’s topics are important issues in the contemporary church, as last summer’s Presbyterian Church national convention demonstrated.

*Matters of Life and Death* doesn’t solve any of these significant issues. It does offer a fresh look at the issues in a way that invites dialog.

Chaplain (LTC) Kenneth M. Rupp  
U.S. Army



# **The Cross and The Swastika**

***F. T. Grossmith***

***Pacific Press, (Idaho), 1989, 125 pages, \$4.95.***

F. T. Grossmith is an evangelist who has extensively worked in Great Britain and Europe.

U.S. Army Chaplain (Major) Henry Gerecke had felt the horror of battle. Two sons had suffered severe injuries. His own hands had been stained with the human blood of Dachau Concentration Camp. Now he faced a decision. Grand Admiral Erich Raeder, former Commander in-Chief of the German Navy had requested that the Commander of the Nuremberg Prison provide him with a spiritual adviser.

This is the story of how Lutheran clergyperson, Henry Gerecke, became the pastor to Hermann Goring, Rudolf Hess, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Alfred Rosenberg, Wilhelm Keitel, Karl Donitz, Erich Raeder, Wilhem Frick, Albert Speer, Fritz Sauckel, Hjalmar Schacht, Walter Funk, Hans Fritzsche, Constantin von Neurath, and Baldur von Schirach. It is a story of personal struggle with the distinction between the sin and the sinner, and the gospel claim that no behavior places one outside the power of the cross.

Prior to the trial, a rumor was circulated that Gerecke was going to be returned to the U.S. His congregation wrote to his wife and requested that she persuade him to remain as their chaplain. Alma Gerecke decided that God was in this and sent her husband a telegram: "Please stay. . . they need you."

He remained in Nuremberg. The book provides a model for ministry in a hopeless situation. Step by step we see each one making a decision. Some like von Ribbentrop acknowledged their guilt, called for God to have mercy on them and then claimed the promise of a renewed life. Others like Alfred Rosenberg felt no need of a man crucified on a cross and who in his final words shouted: "Heil Hitler."

I wish that there had been some discussion of Chaplain Sixtus O'Connor who had served the needs of six prisoners of Roman Catholic background. For an inspirational story of prison ministry, read this book.

**Chaplain (MAJ) Temple G. Matthews**  
**U.S. Army**

# **A Field Guide to Retirement**

***by Alice and Fred Lee***

***Doubleday, 1991, Softcover, 302 pages, \$12.95***

Alice and Fred Lee are living proof that retirement can be as joyful and fulfilling as the working years. Partners in marriage, they continue their journey together as retirement consultants, lecturers and co-authors. After a successful industrial career as a human relations executive and an officer of the American Manage-

ment Association, Fred Lee became a professor of business administration at Southern Methodist University, Dallas. Alice joined him in the late 1970s to form a management consulting firm. They currently present seminars on lifestyle options for retirees.

The Chinese character for crisis is a combination of two symbols: one representing danger, the other opportunity. Today, numerous publications detail the dangers of inadequate financial planning for retirement. In contrast, virtually no books exist, other than this well-researched guide by Alice and Fred Lee, on the abundance of opportunities awaiting retirees who plan ahead.

For individuals transitioning from ministry life to retirement, advance planning is a must. The Lees say they are stunned at how ill-prepared American culture leaves people for their retirement, even those with ministry retirement pay. This book offers a much brighter alternative for those fortunate enough to read it in time.

When making the transition from a structured ministry environment, with well-defined career opportunities and daily camaraderie, what do you do with 2,500 newly found hours per year? One soon learns that the long-anticipated joy of leisure wears out quickly. After about six months the trips have all been taken and old friends visited.

The Lees caution against joining the ranks of the RBB's—Retired, Busy and Bored. In retirement, they point out, we can lose the very things we need most: purpose and accomplishment, a sense of belonging and the opportunity for acknowledgement when we do a good job.

While the book addresses couples, its message applies equally to singles. Reality dictates that one spouse will outlive the other. The Lees stress the importance of developing a complete and sustaining life as individuals—regardless of the strength of the partnership.

The authors believe everybody needs a plan. Before turning to chapters on Hawaiian living and RV nomading, readers are stepped through the fundamentals of retirement planning. Talents, interests and preferences are inventoried. Only then is the reader ready to consider the 14 lifestyle opportunities and options presented.

Perhaps the greatest hidden danger for the prospective retiree lies in missing the opportunity to read this timely, useful and interesting resource for a successful retirement.

Bob and Eddy Irish  
Dallas

## **Fortunate Son: An Autobiography**

***Lewis B. Puller Jr.***

***Grove Weidenfeld, N.Y., Hardcover, 398 pages, \$21.95***

Lewis B. Puller Jr. is the son of the late Marine Corps Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller. Mr. Puller served in Vietnam as a Marine lieutenant when he was severely wounded. He lost both his legs and most of both hands. He now

serves as an attorney in the office of the General Counsel, Department of Defense.

This book deals with the struggle of an only son living in the shadow of a very famous man. It also deals with the stressful experience of leading men in combat and the recovery from the near loss of his own life to wounds. At the same time we see a struggle against alcohol dependency and a lowered self esteem as a result of his physical disfigurement.

Mr. Puller also deals with some spiritual struggles both prior to and after his wounding and rehabilitation. He struggles with who God is and how God works in individual lives. He struggles with God as being his higher power as he begins his recovery from alcoholism.

I found this book to be quite readable and enjoyable. As a former Marine Lieutenant, I could relate to his time at Officer Candidate School and the Marine Officer Basic Course.

This book is highly recommended for its content, its insight into human behavior, its poignancy of relations between father and son, and the struggles of physical and emotional rehabilitation. It has a message for those who work with soldiers who are in the midst of physical rehabilitation and alcohol recovery.

Chaplain (CPT) Thomas C. Condry  
U.S. Army

## Reversed Thunder

Eugene H. Peterson

*San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1988*

Eugene Peterson is the pastor of Christ our King Presbyterian Church of Bel Air, Maryland. He delights the reader with artistic prose and profound theological insight. His two recent books on prayer tackle the overwrought subject with fresh insight from unique, specific points of view.

*Reversed Thunder*, published in 1988, approaches "the praying imagination" from the apocalyptic perspective of the Apostle John. Peterson takes the reader on a non-eschatological journey through the book of Revelation. As it often "takes one to know one," Peterson states early on that "St. John is a poet, using words to intensify our relationship with God." He further declares that the "intent of the Revelation is to put us on our knees before God in worship and to set the salvation-shaping words of God in motion in our lives. We are always trying to use scripture for our purposes: scripture uses us." "I do not read the Revelation to get additional information about the life of faith in Christ . . . but to revive my imagination." Peterson offers the comfort that the beginning of history was declared good, and the culmination of history will be good, and with that knowledge we can deal with life in the "middle." God's love is evident in the history in which we live. With prayer as his focus, Peterson examines the "last words" of this



final book on Christ, the Church, Scripture, worship, evil, politics, witness, judgment, salvation, and heaven.

## Answering God.

**Eugene H. Peterson**

*San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1989.*

Eugene Peterson is the pastor of Christ our King Presbyterian Church of Bel Air, Maryland. He delights the reader with artistic prose and profound theological insight. His two recent books on prayer tackle the overwrought subject with fresh insight from unique, specific points of view.

*Answering God*, published in 1989, is a companion piece to *Reversed Thunder*, and suggests we take the psalms seriously by personalizing them in our private devotion. By praying the psalms, we make the words of the psalmists our own, we are enabled to draw close to the God we love. Not all the chapters of the Psalms are easy to pray. Peterson particularly deals with the difficulty of praying the imprecatory psalms.

These books are meant to be read slowly, and repeatedly. The person who simply wants sermon material will not be disappointed, but Peterson writes to change lives, to alter the way we think and pray and therefore live. Intercession often becomes a wish list; Peterson suggests that our prayers are not tools for getting things from God, but for “being and becoming.” Peterson encourages us to not be intimidated by the “nonpraying world,” which is an ego-centered, anxiety-filled world. In prayer we leave this world and enter a world of wonder, in which we move from an attitude of apprehension to adoration and expectation. Peterson asserts, “We prepare to pray not by composing our prayers but ourselves,” and then guides the reader in this pre-prayer process. He devotes chapters to the language, story, rhythm, metaphor, and liturgy of prayer.

These are two books to be savored and treasured. My only complaint is that Peterson’s footnotes are endnotes, requiring the reader to continually turn to the back of both books for references and elaboration of the text. Even if you believe you know all there is to know concerning prayer, these books will startle you with the author’s fresh insight and eloquence.

Chaplain (MAJ) Robert G. Leroy  
U.S. Army



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# **Military Chaplains' Review**

**Coming in Future Issues of the Military  
Chaplains Review...**

## **Twentieth Anniversary Issue— Winter 1992**

The Military Chaplains' Review is 20 years old. We celebrate its birthday in this issue. Do you have any birthday wishes for this journal? Send them in. Articles are wanted which look to the future. Short stories regarding some aspect of ministry are always welcome. Help us celebrate 20 years of publishing for chaplains, and look forward to another 20!

## **Preaching and Worship Spring 1992**

We explore current techniques and ideas behind preaching in the chaplaincy. Send your articles on chapel preaching, field preaching, and how some of you communicated your messages in the difficult conditions of the Gulf War. Resources, theological underpinnings, and new ideas regarding this most ancient art will be explored.